

Studies in the Development of Secondary Education
in the last two decades in Hong Kong

by

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I Introduction

The education system of Hong Kong has long been criticised as social malaise for it was very much examination-oriented, producing students who had inadequate abilities to think, judge, solve problems and, what is more, weak in command of both Chinese and English.

The problems in education were varied and deep-rooted. There have never been sufficient school places in the secondary schools, more so in the universities. As a result, students had to study hard to compete for these places. Selections were made solely by means of the student's performance in the public examinations. Since passing the examination was the only way through which students could be selected for higher education or get a well-paid job, study for examinations became the only and very important goal of education. Thus other aspects of education were being sacrificed. The curriculum was greatly distorted and reduced to the requirements of the examination only. Little effort was made to cultivate the interests and potentials of the students. All that was important was the examination syllabus to be covered. School-life became boring, lessons were traditional in approach, extra-curricular activities were lacking, all these militated against students' interest in learning. The pressure of examination has dictated the whole education system. Students were deprived of the opportunities of attaining physical, social and cultural development simply because neither time nor effort was put into it by most of the school authorities.

Furthermore, the emphasis on academic achievement makes education irrelevant to the social and economic needs of the society. What the students learned could hardly meet the demands of industries. For those who would not enter the university, the secondary course was considered a 'waste' when they eventually went in for training in the industrial sector.

Facing all these problems, Hong Kong education surely needs changes. What kind of education do the Hong Kong students need? What kind of training do we need to provide for the majority of students who will not have the chance to go to the university? How can we solve the problem of examination pressure? What kind of education can meet the present and future demands of our society? The government has started to take steps to look into these problems and in the past twenty years some measures, though 'piece-meal', were made to try to cope with the many problems

still present in the Hong Kong secondary education system. The present study is an attempt to trace the development of Hong Kong secondary education over the last two decades and examine the outcomes and effects of these developments in relation to the social and economic conditions of Hong Kong. Some of these developments may have mirrored the influence of the British educational development such as the abolition of the 11+ and the raising of the school-leaving age. However, a comparative study is not attempted in this paper in view of the vast differences between Hong Kong and the United Kingdom in terms of social, political and economic structures. The analysis of the development in education is mainly confined to the Hong Kong context.

During the early years of British rule, the education system was largely controlled by the missionaries. The Anglican Educational Society, with a grant of land on Morrison Hill by the Hong Kong Government, was the first to open a school in 1841. Later, the London Missionary Society, the Catholic and the Methodist were also successful in establishing their seminaries for the training of ministers. The Chinese began to set up their own traditional Chinese schools. In 1845, Captain Macleay, the Chinese Secretary, first proposed to give British financial assistance to each of these Chinese schools as a gesture of good will to the Chinese. In 1848, the grants were eventually made to three Chinese schools which were to be supervised by a committee. This was regarded as the beginning of the colony's public system of education.⁽¹⁾ The policy of the Education Committee was not to interfere with the traditional Chinese curriculum, but to add some Christian teachings and to introduce a compulsory basis. In 1852 when the committee was reorganised, the Anglican Bishop George Smith became Chairman. It was understandable that the policy at that time was one which was to increase Christian and English influence in the government schools. For example, no English school was established at that time for training Chinese candidates for the military and civil service for the colonial service. It was for the purpose of training English local elite who were to serve the colony.

In 1861, the study of English was introduced by the committee for the stated purpose of improving understanding and strengthening the bond between the Chinese and the Government.

1. G. B. Macleay, *A History of Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1968, p. 124.

II A Brief History of Education in Hong Kong (1841-1941)

Early Years (1841-1859)

The history of education in Hong Kong is characterised by educational policies which favoured 'payment by results' and a quick return of investments.

In the early days of the colony, educational services were largely provided by the local Chinese and the missionaries. The Chinese teachers taught in traditional Chinese methods and received fees from individual students. Class teaching was not common. The missionaries, with the aim of preaching and spreading the Christian faith, set up colleges or seminaries for the training of Chinese candidates for the ministry. The Morrison Education Society, with a grant of land on Morrison Hill by Sir Henry Pottinger, was the first to open a school in 1843. Later, the London Missionary Society, the Catholics and the Anglicans were all successful in organising their seminaries for the training of ministers. The Chinese began to set up their own traditional Chinese schools. In 1845, Charles Gutzlaff, the Chinese Secretary, first proposed to give monthly financial assistance to each of these Chinese schools as a gesture of good will to the Chinese. In 1847, the grants were eventually made to three Chinese schools which were to be supervised by a committee. This was regarded as "the beginning of the colony's public system of education"⁽¹⁾. The policy of the Education Committee was not to interfere with the traditional Chinese curriculum and method but still Christian teaching was encouraged on a voluntary basis. In 1852 when the committee was reorganised, the Anglican Bishop, George Smith, became Chairman. It was understandable that the policy at that time was one which was to increase Christian and Anglican influence in the government schools. St. Paul's College, an Anglican school, was established not only for preparing Chinese candidates for the ministry but also interpreters for the consular service. It was for the advantage of learning English that many pupils were drawn to this college.

In 1853, the study of English was encouraged by the Committee for the stated purposes of preventing misunderstanding and strengthening the bond between the Chinese and the Europeans.

1. G.B. Endacott, A History of Hong Kong, Plymouth: Oxford University Press, 1958, p.136

Between 1848 and 1852, numbers in the aided schools slowly increased. During Bowring's governorship from 1854-59 there was great development of government sponsored schools and an Inspector of Schools was appointed. In 1856 Bowring appointed a commission to examine the whole education system. Though the commission never got to work and no change was made in the curriculum, Bowring's mind was set on reforming education on a secular basis. It was after 1859 that the Church's influence on education became not so pronounced because of the greater involvement of the government in education.

Emphasis on Secularism (1860-77)

More reforms followed in 1860 under the governorship of Sir Hercules Robinson. The Education Committee was reconstituted as the Board of Education. More schools were under government responsibility. A new Central School, which replaced the various government schools in Victoria, was opened in 1862.

In 1865 the Board of Education was abolished which also marked the end of strong influence of the church in education. Stewart, who thought that the curriculum should be purely secular, abolished Bible teaching in schools. From 1868 to 1872 Stewart carried out Assisted Schools Scheme to help villagers build their own schools but results were not successful. Yet, English was successfully introduced in three government schools. In 1875 the efficiency of teachers was encouraged by means of bonus payments based on the results of the annual inspection. However, Stewart found that English was accepted purely because of its commercial value.

One significant step in the development of education was that government aid and inspection were extended to missionary and voluntary schools by the introduction of the grant-in-aid scheme in 1873. Again, the grants were made on the result of an annual inspection and on completely secular grounds. It was due to the secularism of the scheme that it received much criticism from the religious bodies.

Emphasis on English Teaching (1878-1900)

Sir John Pope Hennessy was the governor during the years 1877-1882. He criticised the whole educational system as inadequate and, in 1878, appointed a committee to promote the teaching of English, thinking that "English should be taught in all government schools because of the needs of

politics and commerce". Since then, the importance of English teaching has been greatly emphasised. Being more sympathetic toward the missionary bodies, Hennessy sought their suggestions and criticisms and, in 1879, the grant-in-aid code was amended. This resulted in further expansion in the educational work of the religious bodies. At this stage, co-operation rather than rivalry existed between the government and the religious bodies⁽²⁾.

In order to create an English speaking Chinese community in Hong Kong a normal school for the training of teachers was set up in 1881. Unfortunately due to various reasons, only two out of the ten recruits eventually became teachers. New hope was placed in the reorganisation of the Central School which might provide teachers more cheaply⁽³⁾.

Bowen, who came in 1883, advocated that English should be taught in all government-supported schools. He wanted to introduce examinations in the medium of English for appointments to the Civil Service. A new Central School was built in 1884, which was called Victoria College, where all teaching was then in English. In 1894 its name was changed to Queen's College.

Two government scholarships were set up in 1884 for studies overseas but the scheme was dropped in 1894 because of few suitable candidates.

In 1890 a government school for girls, Belilios School, was opened, which catered for all nationalities and had two departments, English and Chinese.

Progress in education during this period was slow, especially in the village schools. Lord Knutsford, commented on the education report for 1888, that it was unsatisfactory that more than half the children of Hong Kong should be without education. Yet, compulsory education was not adopted but the employment of schools attendance officers.

By 1890 some of the assisted village schools were taken over by the government and grant-in-aid schools were free but still the Central School and other middle class schools and private schools charged fees.

Progress in education was slowed down during the governorship of Sir William Robinson, at a time when there were great expenses on defence

2. S. Wong, "Development of Adult Education in Hong Kong since World War II", Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh, 1975.

3. G.B. Endacott, op.cit., p.237.

and public works. The government was trying to shift the responsibility of education onto the religious bodies, whose schools at that time showed the greatest development as conditions for grants were amended in 1893. Robinson encouraged more English in schools with the aim "to elevate the Chinese people of the colony by means of English rather than Chinese teaching"⁽⁴⁾. Nevertheless, the Chinese continued to support their own vernacular schools without government grant or inspection.

Hong Kong Education in the Early Twentieth Century

In the early twentieth century, great changes were made in education.

In 1902 the report of the committee of enquiry set up by Blake recommended separate schools for European British subjects and 'English' schools for non-British subjects. In 1903 the grant code was amended radically. This led to the end of the system of payment by results.

In 1907 the Hong Kong Technical Institute was organised which also undertook the training of teachers. In 1911, Lugard, who was interested in education, especially vernacular education, set up a Board of Chinese Vernacular Primary Education.

The Hong Kong University was also established in 1911 with the aim of providing education for Chinese 'similar to that given in the British Universities'. In 1913 a new education ordinance was made to make it obligatory to register all schools with ten or more pupils. More powers of inspection were given and un-necessary or inefficient schools would be closed.

The Board of Education with advisory power was formed in 1921, which consisted of officials of Education Department and representatives of the community. The training of teachers for the rural schools started at Taipo in 1925. Eventually, the first teacher training college, Northcote Training College, was opened in 1939 for the training of teachers for both Anglo-Chinese and Vernacular Schools.

The awareness of the need of practical and technical education began in 1930. Later, in 1933, the Junior Technical School was set up with facilities for pre-apprenticeship training.

4. G.B. Endacott, op.cit., p.241.

171 The problems of education in the early twentieth century were mainly the lack of facilities and sites for schools and the inadequate provision for the training of teachers because of the expansion of education. The emphasis on English teaching and its implications have had important effects on learning and teaching up to the present day.

During the past decade there has been great expansion and improvement in education. Still, further improvement remains to be made.

There are about 1,200 primary schools, 1,200 secondary schools, and 1,200 tertiary schools. The government is responsible for the provision of education.

In all the schools, English is the main language of instruction. The curriculum is similar in all schools. The government is responsible for the provision of education. The curriculum is similar in all schools. The government is responsible for the provision of education.

Education

There are about 1,200 primary schools providing pre-school education for 100,000 children in the three to six year age group. The kindergarten are run by private and voluntary agencies. The government also maintains some kindergartens. The government also maintains some kindergartens. The government also maintains some kindergartens.

Primary Education

There are 1,200 primary schools providing pre-school education for 100,000 children in the three to six year age group.

Primary education is provided for all children in the three to six year age group.

1. Estimated mid-year population in 1970. See Appendix 1, Table 1.1. Hong Kong Government, 1970, p. 201.

2. Ibid., p. 201; Appendix 1.

3. IPA Research, No. 10, Vol. 11, 1970.

III The Education System in Hong Kong

Of the total population in Hong Kong (4,900,000)⁽¹⁾, nearly one third is enrolled in schools, colleges and other educational institutes, which is 1,383,720⁽²⁾.

Over the past decade there has been great improvement and expansion in education. Still, further improvement will be made in the coming years. In 1979-80, 17.6% of government revenue is spent on education⁽³⁾.

There are about 2,600 government, private and subsidised or aided schools, 4 technical colleges, 1 polytechnic, 3 colleges of education and only 2 universities in Hong Kong.

In all of the primary and secondary schools, and in quite a number of kindergartens as well, English is taught as a subject in the curriculum. With the exception of Chinese Middle Schools, which are about only 22% of the total number of secondary schools in Hong Kong, English is the language of instruction for most subjects in the secondary schools and it is the second language for most students.

Kindergartens

There are about 765 kindergartens providing pre-school education for 192,517 children in the three to six year age group. The kindergartens are run by private and voluntary agencies. The government gives assistance only by providing grants of Crown land, re-imbursing non-profit-making groups with payments of rates, allocating premises in public housing estates and providing in-service teacher training through a two-year part-time training course. These kindergartens are supervised by officers of the Kindergarten Section of the Education Department, who only give professional advice when it is needed or during seminars and exhibitions.

Primary Education

There are 6 years of primary education for children of the age 6-14.

Primary education has been free for the first time in all government

1. Estimated mid-year population in 1979. See Appendix 24, Hong Kong 1980, Hong Kong Government, 1980, p.261.
2. Ibid., p.259. Appendix 20.
3. EPA Resources, No. 10, Vol.II, 1980.

schools and in most aided schools since September, 1971. Fee remittance is made to up to 20% of the total enrolment in the few aided schools where fees are still charged.

In September 1979 the primary school enrolment totalled 555,545⁽⁴⁾. Though places are available in the public sector, i.e. government primary schools, many parents still prefer to send their children to private or subsidised primary schools which they think have higher standards and their children may be able to get into a better secondary school after attending these primary schools.

Chinese is the language of instruction in most primary schools. English is taught as a second language. There are eleven junior schools which cater for children whose first language is English.

With the expansion of junior secondary education as proposed in the White Paper, 1974 and the proposal of providing education for every child for nine years, the Secondary School Entrance Examination (S.S.E.E.), which was a selective examination for all primary school leavers for subsidised secondary education, was abolished in 1978. Instead, primary school leavers who want subsidised junior secondary school places will have to participate in the Secondary School Places Allocation (S.S.P.A.). The system is based on internal school assessment scaled by a centrally-administered Academic Aptitude Test, parental choice of secondary schools, and the division of the territory into 24 school 'nets'⁽⁵⁾.

The Green Paper came out in 1980 aimed at making proposals for improving education at pre-primary and primary levels. It is now still under discussion.

Secondary Education

The secondary schools are run by the government or private agencies.

There are 4 main types of secondary schools:

a) Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools (333):

These are grammar day schools with English as the medium of instruction. They offer a five-year course with a broad range of academic subjects leading

4. Reported statistics from the Education Department, Wah Kin Yat Po, 24th March, 1980.

5. Hong Kong 1980, Hong Kong Government, 1980, p.64.

to the Hong Kong Certificate of Education examination. In some schools there is also a two year sixth-form course to prepare for the Advanced Level Examination of the University of Hong Kong or the United Kingdom General Certificate of Education.

b) Chinese Middle Schools (97) :

These are schools with Chinese as the medium of instruction. They provide students with courses leading to the Hong Kong Certificate of Education examination. In some of these schools, they also provide a one-year Middle 6 course leading to the Hong Kong Higher Level Examination.

c) Secondary Technical Schools (23):

The instruction is in English with Chinese taught as a second language. These schools also prepare students for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education but emphasis is given to technical and commercial subjects. There is also Form 6 in some technical institutes. Students can proceed to studying in the technical institutes, the polytechnic or the technical teachers' college.

d) Prevocational Schools (13):

All of these schools are fully subsidised by the government. They provide a three-year course made up of 50 to 50 per cent general education and 40 to 50 per cent technical education. The curriculum mainly covers industrial or commercial fields whose aim is to introduce basic knowledge and skills so as to prepare students for a suitable career in industries or commerce. There are opportunities to provide students with craft apprenticeship so that they can continue their studies in technical institutes.

Technical Institutes

There are 5 technical institutes which provide courses at craft and technical levels on a full-time, block release, part-time day release and evening basis. A number of short courses are also offered to meet the special requirements of industry and commerce. There are also 100 places provided for handicapped students in various standard courses. A unit in the Technical Education Division of the Education Department plans and advises on the provision of technical education and vocational training for the disabled.

Post-Secondary Education

There are three approved post-secondary colleges, namely, the Hong Kong Baptist College, the Hong Kong Shue Yan College and Lingnan College.

With the recommendations of the 1978 White Paper on the Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education, government financial assistance was offered to these colleges. A student loan scheme is available for eligible students at these approved colleges. The establishment of these colleges help to ease the great demands on further education in Hong Kong where there are only two universities.

Hong Kong Polytechnic

The Hong Kong Polytechnic developed from the former Hong Kong Technical College. It received finances mainly from the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee.

The Polytechnic offers full-time, sandwich, part-time day-release and part-time evening programmes of one to four years' duration, leading to the awards of associateship, advanced higher diploma, higher diploma, diploma, higher certificate, certificate and other qualifications. These include a wide range of technical and commercial subjects. The Polytechnic, because of the demands from society, is expanding still. It has been engaging in various consultant and investigational work for commerce and industry.

The Universities

The University of Hong Kong was established in 1911 whereas the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which is a federal university with three constituent colleges: Chung Chi, New Asia and United, received its charter in 1963. Both universities receive grants from the government. The Hong Kong university follows the British system, providing three years of university education. The Chinese university more or less follows the American system, providing four years of university education.

Both universities provide a wide range of academic and research work. The Schools of Education attached to the universities help to train teachers to obtain post-graduate qualification in teaching.

The Extra-mural departments of the universities also provide various courses for further education and adult education for the community.

Teacher Education

There are 3 colleges of Education: Grantham, Northcote and Sir Robert Black. These colleges provide 2 year full-time courses to train students to become non-graduate teachers qualified to teach in primary and junior secondary schools. The third-year courses aim at providing advanced training and also in-service training. Part-time courses are available for practising teachers.

Technical teacher education and training are provided at the Hong Kong Technical Teachers' College which is administered by the Education Department.

Adult Education

Adult Education is provided by the Evening Institute, the Evening School of Higher Chinese Studies, the adult education and recreation centres, the Technical Institute evening department and various voluntary organisations.

Formal courses are offered by the Evening Institute from literacy to post-secondary levels. At secondary school level, there are courses for adults which lead to the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination. At post-secondary level, teachers' courses provide in-service professional training in the teaching of English, mathematics, physical education and the teaching of a number of creative subjects. English courses are provided at different levels which prepare adult students for the English language paper (Syllabus B) of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education. Other classes on the use of English are also organised.

The Evening School of Higher Chinese Studies offers a three-year general arts diploma course at post-secondary level in Chinese literature and philosophy. Various specialised, short courses on various aspects of Chinese art, classics and culture are also offered.

The adult education and recreation centres provide non-formal education which includes many cultural, social and recreational activities. The aim is to foster individual awareness within the community and to cultivate creative ability and individual talents. Various activities have been held in collaboration with other organisations in the community.

The departments of Extra-mural Studies of the two universities also organise courses for further study for adults. These include evening and day courses in various vocational and professional fields.

In accordance with the recommendations of the White Paper on senior secondary and tertiary education, the Adult Education section of the Education Department is expanding⁽⁶⁾. The expansion programme includes the development of adult education curricula and related activities. It also plans to provide more science subjects in the upper forms which requires the provision of additional laboratory technicians and facilities for practical work. Students of adult education centres may be able to use the laboratory facilities provided by some of the schools.

At present there are 144 centres operated by the Adult Education Section throughout Hong Kong with a total enrolment of 25,773 in 754 classes. In September 1979 16 adult education and recreation centres with a registered membership of 47,000 were open to the public.

Special Education

There are 58 special schools, three for the blind, four for the deaf, 20 for the physically handicapped, 23 for the mentally handicapped and 8 for the maladjusted and socially deprived. In addition there are 133 special and resource classes in ordinary government schools and 620 less severely physically handicapped children have been integrated into ordinary classes in government and aided schools. All these classes are supervised by the Special Education Section of the Education Department.

Since April 1979 the Education Department has begun to take over the responsibility for the provision of education for the mentally-handicapped children from fifteen centres previously subvented by the Social Welfare Department.

Places in special education will be expanded over the next decade. In April 1979 the Codes of Aid for primary and secondary special schools and special classes were revised to provide subsidies for approved paramedical and social work services in special schools. Screening and group testing services will cover all primary school pupils as recommended by the White Paper⁽⁷⁾.

Overseas training is provided for the specialist staff of the Special Education Section and local in-service courses are run for teachers in

6. The announcement is found in Daily Information Bulletin, 15.9.1979, p.3.
7. White Paper 'Integrating the Disable into the Community: A United Effort' was published in October, 1977.

special schools and classes. The Special Education Section also helps to organise short courses, seminars and workshops for other teachers and trainee-teachers.

The Education Structure

The overall education structure⁽⁸⁾ of Hong Kong education from pre-primary level up to university level can be summarised in a diagram as shown on the opposite page.

The Education Department is headed by the Director of Education assisted by the Board of Education in matters pertaining to the development and improvement of education in Hong Kong. Under the provisions of the Education Ordinance the Director of Education is charged with the superintendence of matters relating to education. He directly controls all government schools and all other schools registered under the Education Ordinance. The directorate structure of the Department is undergoing re-organisation starting from September 1977. A Schools Division was introduced which is responsible for the administration of kindergartens, primary and secondary schools on unified regional, area and district areas. A Services Division was set up which is responsible for educational services such as Special Education, Education Television, Careers and Student Guidance as well as Overseas Students and Scholarships. These two divisions are headed separately by an assistant director of education who is under the charge of a senior assistant director. Further re-organisation will take place in the coming years. A summary diagram of the administrative structure is given on a separate page⁽⁹⁾.

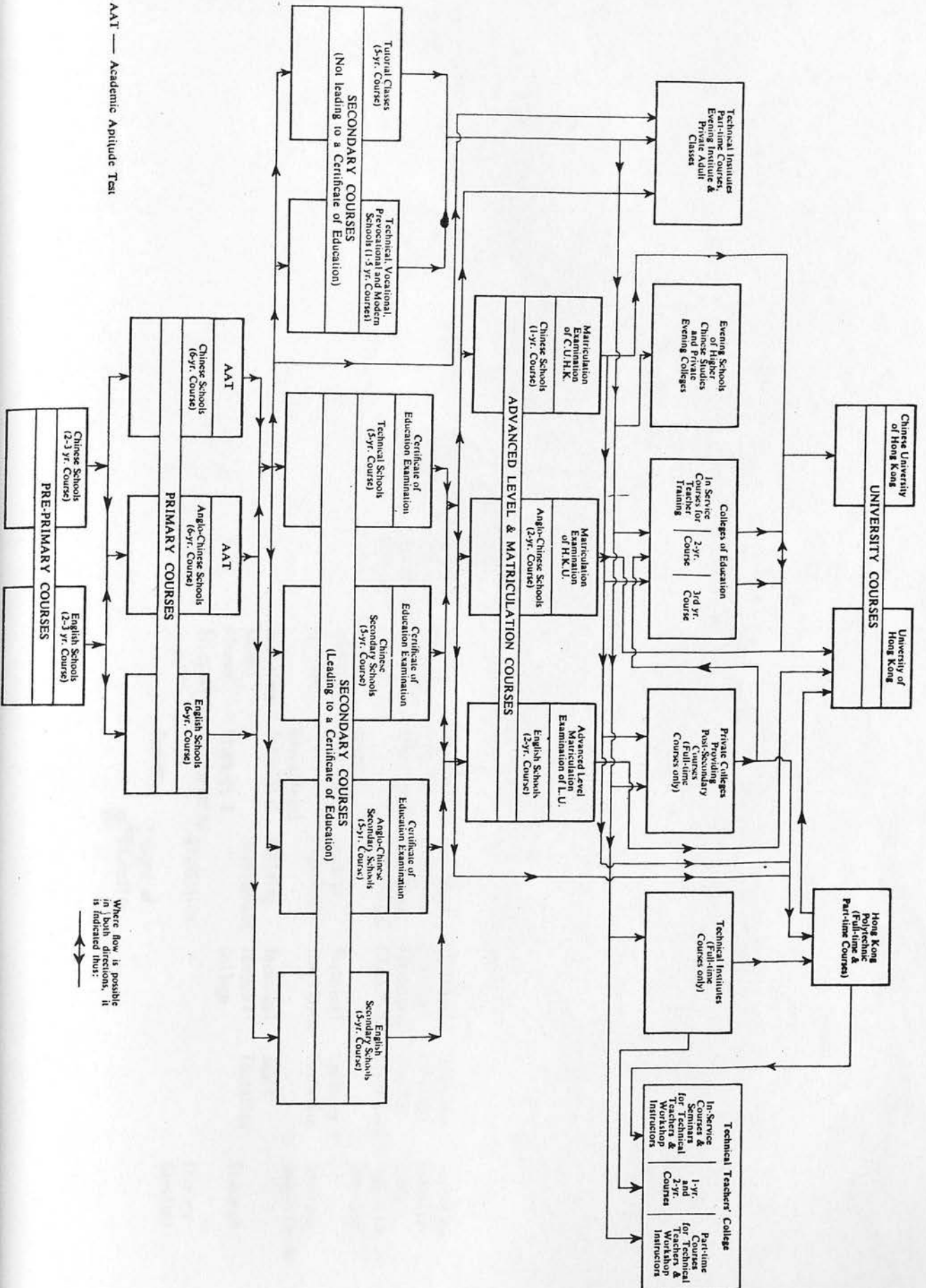
8. Taken from Figure 1 in Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, Education Department, Hong Kong, 1978.

9. Ibid., Figure III.

FIGURE I

AS AT 31.3.1978

THE EDUCATION STRUCTURE



AAT — Academic Aptitude Test

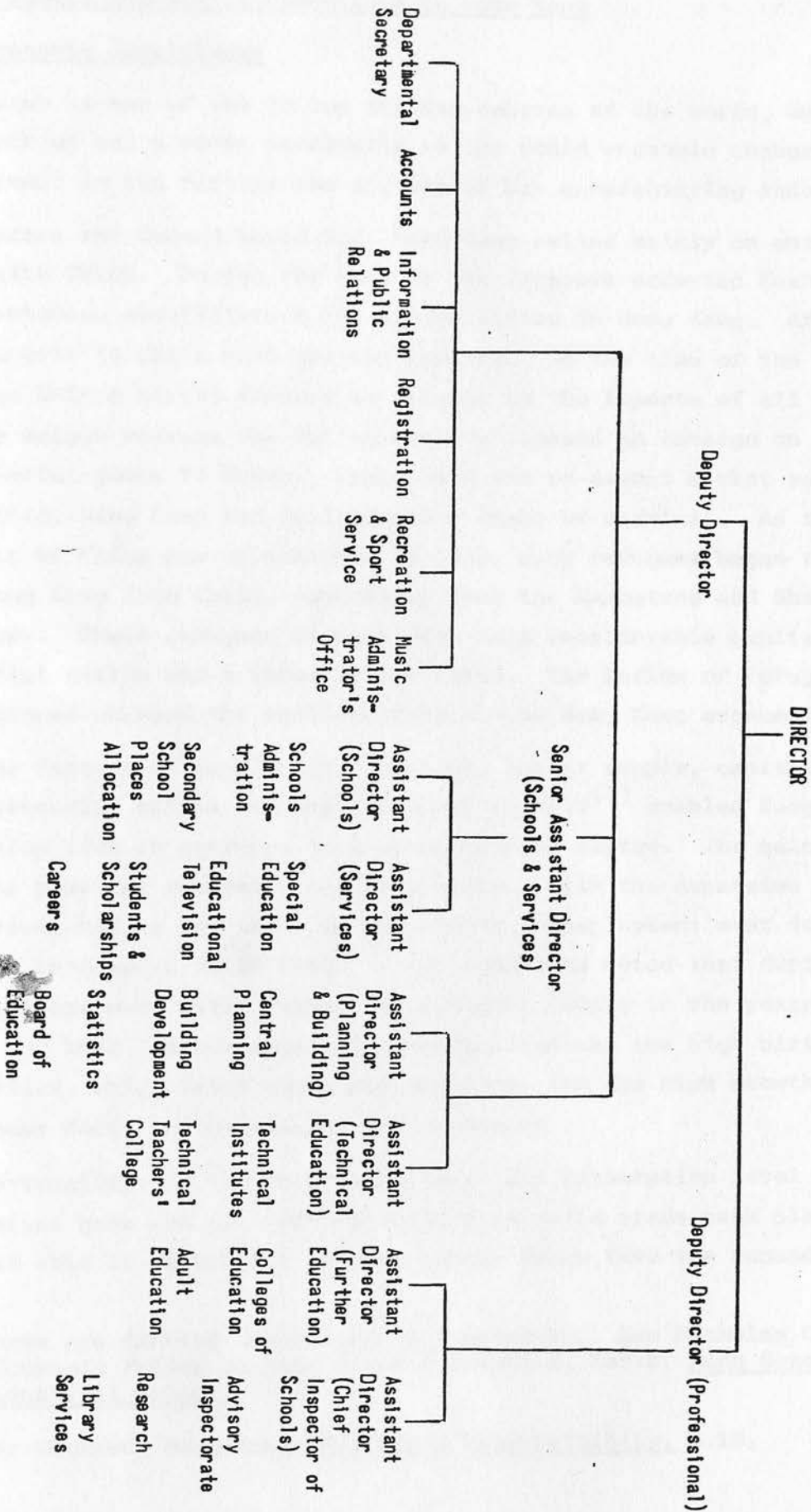
Where flow is possible in both directions, it is indicated thus: \longleftrightarrow

(Source: Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, Education Department, Hong Kong.)

Figure 111

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

as at 1.9.77 (interim stage in reorganisation)



(Source: Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, Education Department, Hong Kong.)

IV Economic and Social Conditions in Hong Kong

Economic development

Known as one of the 20 top trading centres of the world, Hong Kong owes much of her present prosperity to the rapid economic changes and development in the fifties and sixties of her manufacturing industries.

Before the Second World War, Hong Kong relied mainly on entrepot trade with China. During the War, as the Japanese occupied Kwangtung, many Cantonese manufacturers set up industries in Hong Kong. After the war, exports to China were greatly reduced. In the time of the Korean War, the United States imposed an embargo on the imports of all goods of Chinese origin whereas the United Nations imposed an embargo on the exports of essential goods to China. Thus, with the re-export market severely restricted, Hong Kong had to find other means of survival. As the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, many refugees began to pour into Hong Kong from China, especially from the Kwangtung and Shanghai Provinces. These refugees brought with them considerable capital, entrepreneurial skills and a large labour force. The influx of refugees and its consequences changed the whole picture of the Hong Kong economy.

The factors of production, location, labour supply, capital inflow, entrepreneurial skills and institutional factors⁽¹⁾ enabled Hong Kong to develop from an entrepot to a manufacturing centre. The quick recovery from the post-war recession was remarkable. With the expansion of manufacturing industries, mainly textiles, in the 1950's, unemployment went down to 12.2% in 1954 and 1.7% in 1961⁽²⁾. It should be noted that during this period, there were still 'waves' of refugees coming in the years 1951-2, 1957-8 and 1962. Accompanying the immigration was the high birth rate in the fifties, which later gradually declined, and the high growth rate of the labour force in the sixties and seventies.

Fortunately, as the purchasing power and consumption level in Europe and America grew and also liberalisation in world trade took place, Kong was able to absorb her growing labour force into the expanding

1. There are factors recognised by Szczepanik. See Nicholas C. Owen, "Economic Policy in Hong Kong" in Hopkins, Keith, Hong Kong: The Industrial Colony, p.147.

2. Joe England, Hong Kong: Britain's Responsibility, p.12.

manufacturing industries. The largest markets for exports then became the United States and Britain instead of China.

The manufacturing sector grew in importance between 1961 and 1971, which was then, and still remains, the largest employer, accounting for over 40% of the total industrial work-force⁽³⁾. Hong Kong's industries and trade, up to now, have mainly been export-oriented.

The volume of Hong Kong's export was increasing at an average rate of 8.3 per cent. But, starting in 1959, textile exports to Britain suffered restrictions⁽⁴⁾. However, the advent of trade restrictions provided the incentive to produce higher quality products to make up for the loss in the reduction in export quantity. An Advisory Committee on Diversification was eventually formed to give advice on the process of diversification of the economy, with particular reference to the manufacturing sector. Its work was completed in 1979 and policies are being implemented to promote diversification.

The textile and clothing industries, Hong Kong's largest industries, provide about 43% by value of total domestic exports. These industries continue to grow despite the restrictions imposed by the bilateral textile agreements with the E.E.C. and the United States. The clothing industry employs some 260,615 workers, about 30% of the total industrial work-force⁽⁵⁾. Besides textiles, other industries grew in importance as a result of diversification. These include electronics industry, the second largest, plastics industry, watches and clocks industry and other light industries producing consumer goods. As competition is keen among neighbouring countries, Hong Kong has to develop modern technology in her industries in order to cope with the rising demands in standards. Thus, there is, and will always be, strong demands of commerce and industry for "dextrous and reliable" labour force.

Hong Kong is entirely dependent on imported raw materials and semi-manufactured goods because of the lack of natural resources. The raw materials are mainly imported from Japan (23%) whereas foodstuffs and live animals are from China (45%).

3. Hong Kong 1977, p.3.

4. Ibid., p.9.

5. Hong Kong 1980, p.21.

Besides being an industrial and commercial centre, Hong Kong is also developing into an international finance and gold centre with her well-developed banking system and gold market.

Hong Kong's economic success over the years is attributed to the following factors:⁽⁶⁾

1. Consistent economic policies of free enterprise and free trade,
2. Industrious work force,
3. a sophisticated commercial and industrial infrastructure,
4. a modern and efficient seaport with a computerised cargo terminal,
5. excellent world-wide communications.

With the interplay of these factors, the Hong Kong economy has continued to grow over the last twenty years. In 1979, the total merchandise trade amounted to \$161,77 million, with imports rose by 36% to \$85,837 million, domestic export by 37% to \$55,912 million and re-export by 52% to \$20,022 million⁽⁷⁾. The government revenue expanded 38 times from \$309 million in 1951-2 to \$11,766 million in 1978-9⁽⁸⁾.

So far as Hong Kong continues to prosper, there has been no change in the Government's laissez-faire policy on the economy. As is openly stated in the government annual report:

"The government's principal role in the economy is to ensure a stable framework in which commerce and industry can function efficiently and effectively with minimum interference. The government normally intervenes only in response to the pressure of economic and social needs, and neither protects nor subsidizes manufactures"⁽⁹⁾

Such non-intervention combined with low taxation, free competition and 'undeveloped' trade unions indeed make Hong Kong a haven for industrialists and investors who are assured of their high and rapid returns with the least official control, from the government. But, on the other hand, such an economic policy maximizes the chance of exploitation and inequality of the working people.

6. Ibid., p.19.

7. Ibid., p.23

8. Ibid., p.38

9. Ibid., p.19

Social conditions

The working people are those who have the least to benefit from the enormous wealth created in Hong Kong by their toil and labour. It is noted that between 1971-73, labour productivity went up by 15, but real wage only went up by 3.4%. Even in 1974, the year of depression, productivity went up by 18.7% while real wages dropped by 5.4%. On the other hand, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, Jardine Matheson, and Windsor, a textile and garment company, increased their profits by 12%, 22% and 74% respectively.⁽¹⁰⁾

Though Hong Kong people enjoy a high living standard second only to Japan in Asia, it should be pointed out that it "has not come about because the wages are fair, or that working conditions are good"⁽¹¹⁾, but it is largely the result of long working hours and cumulative income from several members of the family. The 1968 survey of Resettlement estate dwellers carried out by the Hong Kong University shows that Hong Kong workers had the longest working day (52% worked 10 hours a day or more) in South East Asia. Another survey in 1969 by Dr. Mitchell shows that over 80% of his sample worked 7 days a week⁽¹²⁾. Before the introduction of compulsory primary education in 1971, child labour was a serious problem in Hong Kong. The 1971 census shows that 35,925 (6.9%) of children between the ages of 10 and 14 were "economically active". It may be suspected that probably thousands of children were then still working illegally.

There is still no limit on working hours for men nor a minimum wage; "the wage level prevailing is essentially the result of an interplay of the economic forces of supply and demand"⁽¹³⁾. Since there is virtually no protection against unemployment or contribution to social security scheme, the workers are those most hit in case of any recession or change in the economic structure.

Compared to expenditures on public works projects such as cross-harbour tunnel, desalination plants or underground railway system, the expenditure on social welfare is appallingly small (only 1% of total government expenditure in the late 1960's)⁽¹⁴⁾. Following the Report of Social Security

10. Figures quoted from Raymond Fung, "Hong Kong and the Church in Hong Kong", p.3.

11. Ibid., p.4.

12. Joe England, op.cit., p.13.

13. Hong Kong 1980, p.48.

a few changes were made after 1967. Yet there is still no legislation on minimum wage, unemployment benefit, old age pension and sickness insurance. Not until recently has the government conceded to make provisions for maternity leave and redundancy payment. But still, the system of workmen's compensation for injury is inadequate and needs improvement.

Judging from the economic advancements in Hong Kong and the huge annual surpluses accumulated and put into reserve by the government over the years⁽¹⁵⁾, it is perhaps justified to say that the government has been concentrating on the creation of wealth for the investors, businessmen and the bourgeoisie (and herself as well) but has not been doing her part in providing adequate social welfare in terms of housing, labour legislation, provisions in education at all levels, and a fair distribution of income, to her local people⁽¹⁶⁾.

It has been said that "the power in Hong Kong resides in the Jockey Club, Jardine and Matheson, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank and the Governor - in that order"⁽¹⁷⁾. Perhaps only by democratisation could the common people, instead of just the present elites, businessmen and the bourgeoisie, have the chance to enjoy the fruit of the prosperity of Hong Kong. Furthermore, the mentality of making money in the shortest possible time inherent in the mind of the investors, without due regard to the well-being of the workers, may only be modified if they can see that the stability of Hong Kong will not be affected following the expiration of the lease which will come to an end in 1997 or even earlier. That means to say, the present social and economic conditions of Hong Kong are largely the outcome of an administrative and economic policy of a colonial government advised by businessmen in an age of uncertain political future in which China will also play an important part. However, as China is at present economically benefitted by the prosperity of Hong Kong, which is manifested by the fact that over 40% of her foreign exchange being channelled through Hong Kong, it is postulated that the political uncertainty will not affect the economic situation of Hong Kong in the foreseeable future.

14. See comments by Joe England, op.cit., p.13 and in Hong Kong: A Case to Answer, pp.29-30.
15. With the exception of only 3 years, there has been a series of substantial surpluses up to and including 1978-9. Hong Kong 1980, p.38.
16. This 'weakness' is considered as not accidental, but a reflection of the structure of colonial government. Keith Hopkins, op.cit., p.xii.
17. Richard Hughes, Hong Kong - Borrowed Place - Borrowed Time, p.17.

V. Developments in the Last Two Decades (1960-1980)

A. Education Expansion over the Years

The changing size and structure of the population invariably places heavy demands on the provisions of education, especially education for the young people.

The most dramatic changes in Hong Kong's population took place in the late forties and the early fifties. Whenever there were unsettled conditions in China there would be an influx of refugees. Between 1945 and 1949 about 1.5 million people entered Hong Kong from China⁽¹⁾. Many of them were political refugees coming from Shanghai. They brought with them capital, technological skills, entrepreneurs and a labour force, which later resulted in an expansion of manufacturing industries. Associated with the immigration was the high birth rate in the fifties. In the five years 1951-56 the population grew from an estimated 2.0 million to 2.6 million⁽²⁾. The population's rapid growth forced on Hong Kong the need to expand exports to finance the imports of goods needed by the people. At the same time, the United Nations embargo on trade with China changed the nature of Hong Kong's entrepot trade to domestic manufactures mainly for exports. As the economy recovered, Hong Kong as yet attracted many Chinese from the Canton province. Thus resulting in a rapid growth of labour force. By 1961 the population had reached over 3.1 million⁽³⁾ of which 41% was under the age of 15. Such a rapid growth of population and its high proportion of young people inevitably posed immense problems in the provision of education which had never been adequate since the end of the Second World War, at the time when both school facilities and teachers were lacking.

In 1948 only 120,000 children out of a possibly 225,000 children were at school; that was to say, about 45% were without any schooling at that time⁽⁴⁾. With the increasing number of babies born in the fifties it was foreseeable that the expansion of primary school places was urgently

1. Joe England, Hong Kong: Britain's Responsibility, 1976, p.12.
2. Hong Kong 1977, p.2.
3. See 1961 Census figures in Hong Kong Statistics, 1947-1967, 1969, p.14
4. David Podmore, "The Population of Hong Kong", Hopkins, Keith, Hong Kong: The Industrial Colony, 1971, p.42.

needed. By 1954 the number of government, grant-in-aid and subsidised schools as well as the private schools increased but still the places available were not sufficient. Late in 1954 the Government began the seven year primary school expansion programme, aiming at providing by the end of 1961 enough places in primary schools for all children of primary school age. New schools had to be built and facilities needed to be expanded constantly in order to cope with the growth in student numbers. In 1959 there was the first inception of ground floor government-aided primary schools built as part of the resettlement housing blocks in Resettlement Estates to cater for the children living there. Though the facilities and the environment were far from satisfactory in this kind of school, it was hoped that this new type of school would "materially ease the general problem of finding primary school places for all the children in the Colony"⁽⁵⁾.

Besides building new schools the Government provided more school places by means of bisessionalism. The increase in the number of classrooms was also partially achieved by the building of extensions to existing schools. All these provisions, together with the special afternoon classes, which were formed in 1950 for the benefit of those children who were unable to obtain admission to primary schools, made great progress in the expansion of primary school places.

By 1961 when the seven year primary school expansion programme was officially ended, there were 484,536 enrolments in primary schools, a total increase of 313,000, which exceeded the target figure of 215,000 by 98,000⁽⁶⁾. Though these figures seem impressive, many more primary places as well as secondary places were still needed. The effort to provide primary education for all children was to continue in the years to come. It should be pointed out that much contribution had been made by the voluntary and private bodies rather than the government in providing school places for children. In 1961 among the existing primary schools there were altogether only 83 government schools but 432 grant-in-aid or subsidised schools and 1,047 private schools⁽⁷⁾.

The number of new government primary schools built in the same year,

5. Hong Kong Report 1959, p.115.

6. Hong Kong Report, 1961, p.112.

7. See Table 11.1 in Hong Kong Statistics, 1947-1967, 1969, p.183.

from January to the end of September, was only 4 in comparison to 42 and 5 for the government-aided and private schools respectively⁽⁸⁾. Moreover, the actual expenditure on education in the year 1961 totalled H.K.\$115.72 million, which was only about 13.7% of the total Government expenditure (H.K.\$845.30 million)⁽⁹⁾.

As industry and commerce flourished and since Chinese parents have been known for their respect for learning and education, school places were never enough for all who needed them. The large number of private schools, many of them were profit-making and regarded education as a business, could well reflect the urgent demand for school places. In the year 1962 the Secondary School Entrance Examination (S.S.E.E.), which was a competitive examination to select pupils for places in government and aided secondary schools (20%) and for aided places in private secondary schools (40%) replaced the Joint Primary Six Examination. All primary schools were invited to participate but entrance from each school was limited to 60% of its primary six pupils. The percentage might be increased up to 100% depending on the previous examination results. Thus many parents would send their children to those schools which were known to have good results in the examinations, even though these schools might charge higher fees. Scholarships were also awarded on the results of the examination. The introduction of this examination marked the competitive nature of primary education whose curriculum became imbalanced as a result of the over-emphasis on English, Chinese and Mathematics, which were the only three subjects to be examined in the public examination (S.S.E.E.).

As Hong Kong continued to make tremendous progress in industry and commerce in the mid sixties, the demand for both skilled and semi-skilled labour exceeded the supply. Thus attention was focussed on the expansion of industrial and technical education. As emphasised in the Government Report of 1971:

"The qualities of flexibility and mobility of the local labour force, which have stood Hong Kong in such good stead in the past, can no longer be depended on to meet the ever-increasing and diversifying demands of industry for specialised labour of every kind. A

8. See the figures in Appendix VI in Hong Kong Report 1961, p.426.

9. See the figures in Table 11.8 and Table 9.14 in Hong Kong Statistics, 1947-1967, 1969, pp.187 and 163.

systematic approach to the problems of industrial training and technical education is required if a serious shortage of labour, and especially skilled labour, is not to act as a brake on the continued expansion of the economy"(10)

As a result, the Industrial Training Advisory Committee was set up in 1965 to make recommendations in the whole field of industrial training. One of the recommendations was the setting up of the first Technical Institute in 1969. Further institutes were to be built and the facilities provided by the secondary modern and pre-vocational schools were to be expanded⁽¹¹⁾. It was also planned that a Polytechnic was to be built up from the Technical College, which would provide industrial and commercial courses at higher and professional levels.

1965 White Paper on Education Policy

The first sign of a systematic, conscious effort in dealing with the educational problems of the Colony was made in 1962 when an Education Commission was set up to make recommendations on the overall educational needs of the Colony and the system of financing education. The Commission's report was forwarded in 1964 and its findings were published in a Government White Paper on Education in April, 1965.

The White Paper was primarily concerned with provisions in primary education. It was intended to "provide as rapidly as possible a subsidised primary school place for every child of the right age who seeks one"⁽¹²⁾. In order to achieve this, a number of non-profit-making private schools and also private sessions of many existing subsidised schools were added to the list of aided primary schools. More financial assistance was given by doubling the amount of money the government contributed to the provision of free places in primary schools.

The priority given to the expansion in primary education was necessary for, as shown by the 1966 By-Census, there were 48.81% of persons under 15 years of age who did not have any schooling or their education attainment was at kindergarten level⁽¹³⁾. However, on secondary education, the White Paper intended to include a minimum of between 1,500 and 2,000 new

10. Hong Kong 1971, p.13.

11. Ibid.

12. Director of Education, Annual Summary 1965-66, Education Department, pp.1-2.

13. See Table 11.11 in Hong Kong Statistics 1947-1967, 1969, p.189.

subsidised places annually in private secondary schools so that 15 - 20% of all primary school leavers could have a subsidised school place in government, aided or selected private schools. This proposal has been adopted up to today, as it was then considered to be of a long term nature, recognising that new secondary schools could not be brought quickly into existence.

It was regrettable to note that in this White Paper, future secondary school planning was to be based on the 15 - 20% figure, though it was true that the rapidly increasing number of primary school leavers would impose great demands on the number of aided secondary school places over the years. However, in 1970 re-appraisal of the progress was made and the government decided to expand secondary education further so that by 1971 a subsidised primary place for every child could be achieved.

Expansion in primary and secondary school places continued rapidly and steadily during the years 1961-1971. The increasing number of enrolments in different levels can be seen in the following table:

<u>Student Enrolments (1961-1971)</u>			
	<u>1961</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>
Kindergarten	30,442	56,520	69,069
Primary	484,536	657,585	689,561
Secondary	106,477	222,890	235,387
Post-secondary	15,803	9,549	9,626
Adult Education	20,669	35,757	36,576
Special Education	691	1,194	1,261
<u>Total</u>	<u>658,618</u>	<u>983,495</u>	<u>1,041,480</u>
	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>
Kindergarten	112,774	123,218	132,900
Primary	752,171	765,397	764,313
Secondary	264,056	279,318	295,820
Post-secondary	11,522	11,739	11,799
Adult Education	53,663	58,196	61,113
Special Education	2,115	2,672	2,715
<u>Total</u>	<u>1,196,301</u>	<u>1,240,540</u>	<u>1,268,660</u>

(Source: Hong Kong Reports, 1961 - 1971)

The expenditure on education has increased from \$122 million⁽¹⁴⁾ in 1961 to \$490 million⁽¹⁵⁾ in 1971.

14. See Appendix VI in Hong Kong Report 1961, p.427.

15. See the table on Government Expenditure on Education, EPA Resources, No. 10, Hong Kong Christian Council.

Further plans of expansion in the secondary schools began to take place in the early seventies. In 1970 the Government announced its intention to provide at least three years of aided post-primary education to all children in the 12 -14 age group who are seeking it and primary education was to become free eventually in 1971 in all government Chinese schools and the majority of aided primary schools. As an aided primary school place is made available to every child, the Director of Education is empowered to serve attendance orders on parents who do not send their children to designated primary schools without reasonable excuse. At this stage, primary education becomes free and compulsory, though some private schools and the English speaking schools continue to charge fees.

The Government's target to provide three years of aided secondary education for all children in the 12 -14 age group was to be achieved in stages. It was hoped to provide places for 50% of the age group by 1976. Only about 18 - 20% of the 12 - 16 age group could proceed to aided courses in the last two years (F.4-5) of the Certificate of Education course. As more junior secondary places are required to provide for all children of the 12 - 14 age group, the Government, besides building more new schools, will also rely on the provisions of the private sector to a certain extent; as the 1971 Report states: "The extra school places to be found in F.I+III under this new policy will be provided either directly in government or aided schools, or in private non-profit-making schools which will be assisted for the purpose, or by buying places in suitable private profit-making schools..."⁽¹⁶⁾.

The buying of school places in private profit-making schools has undoubtedly solved the problem of providing enough places for the junior secondary pupils in the time of great demand.

The Government's policy on the expansion of secondary education was later expounded in the White Paper, 'Secondary Education in Hong Kong over the Next Decade', which came out in October, 1974. The Government's main objective, as expressed in this White Paper, was to make available by 1979, subsidised education for every child for nine years - six years of primary education followed by three years of junior secondary education. As there would be sufficient aided junior secondary places in 1979, the selective examination, the S.S.E.E., would be abolished. In order to achieve the target of providing enough junior secondary places, various temporary

16. Hong Kong 1971, p.75.

measures had to be taken such as flotation and extended day system, other than the building of new schools and the buying of places in the private schools. These temporary measures together with the problems of insufficient senior secondary places for the children of the 15-16 age group, create other related problems in education such as the suitability of the present curriculum and the methods of assessment, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

When education becomes compulsory to cover children under 15 in September 1980 the attendance orders are to be extended to cover children under 15 and the minimum age of employment will be raised from 14 to 15 from September 1980 correspondingly.

Until 1974 the Government's concern in education has been the provision of sufficient school places for primary and junior secondary pupils and, undeniably, massive expansion in school places has been achieved. Especially in the secondary schools, enrolments have increased considerably from 264,056 in 1969 to 524,392 in 1979⁽¹⁷⁾. It should, however, be stressed that such over-riding concern in expansion has resulted in the overall neglect in the improvement of education in general. Moreover, the growing demand of industrial and technical education overshadows the need for the development of a more balanced, cultural education. Furthermore, the competitive and selective nature of secondary education has aroused the public's attention to the need to review the Hong Kong education system as a whole. With the recommendations and implementation of the 1974 White Paper, 1978 White Paper on Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education and the subsequent Special Committee Report on Form Six Education, Hong Kong education, with secondary education in particular, will have to undergo a series of changes as it moves into the eighties.

17. See Appendices in Hong Kong Report, 1970 and Hong Kong 1980.

B. Changes from the Grammar School Tradition

i. 1974 White Paper, 'Secondary Education in Hong Kong over the Next Decade.'

As the aim stated in the 1965 White Paper on Education Policy, namely the provision of universal primary education, was achieved in 1971, the government began to take steps in developing secondary education. The 1974 White Paper spells out the government's policy on the expansion of secondary education in the next ten years.

The main objective of the government is to make available, by 1979, subsidised education for every child for nine years. During these nine years, i.e. six years in a primary school and three years in a secondary school, all children will follow a common course of general education.

The main recommendations are as follows:

1. Nine years of general education for all by 1979.
2. In junior secondary forms, between 25% and 30% of the general curriculum would be allocated to practical and technical subjects. A liking for practical subjects should be fostered and pupils encouraged to participate in cultural activities.
3. The Secondary School Entrance Examination will no longer be necessary and will be abolished. An alternative system will be devised to regulate the entry of pupils from primary schools to secondary schools possibly in the same area.
4. The importance of technical education at the secondary level in line with Hong Kong's future needs is greatly emphasised. The technical institutes will provide substantial opportunities for Form 3 leavers to obtain technical training and also the training of apprentices.
5. Individual school authorities are left to decide for themselves whether the medium of instruction should be English or Chinese. However, appropriate measures should be adopted to ensure that there is no drop in the standard of English of those pursuing studies beyond Form 3.
6. On examinations, as 100% provision of junior secondary places is achieved, the Secondary School Entrance Examination would be set for the last time in May, 1978. A new public examination, the Hong Kong Junior Certificate of Education will be introduced to provide academic evidence of achievement of the Form 3 leavers and also serve as a means of selection for further subsidised education.

7. The present Hong Kong Certificate of Education course will continue and will also be used as the basis for selection for entry to Form 6.
8. On the implementation of the new system, it is emphasised that the objective of providing sufficient subsidised places in junior secondary forms for all children in the 12 - 14 age group, and in senior forms for 40% of the 15 - 16 age group "will be achieved only if there is the fullest co-operation by sponsors and school managements". The targets of providing sufficient junior places and 40% subsidised senior secondary places will be achieved by means of a massive building programme and the adaption of a number of temporary measures which are as follows:

i) Bisessional operation, i.e. two schools operating in one building with one school using the building in the morning and the other in the afternoon. It was considered the most effective means of increasing enrolments quickly.

ii) Rotation, i.e. a six day working week for the school building but pupils and teachers come in and work for five days.

iii) Flotation/Extended Day. Flotation is thought to be the best available method of providing additional places in the shortest possible time. It is the maximum utilisation of all the available rooms, classrooms and special rooms, as form basis. That will provide more classes than actual classrooms in a school and it will permit up to 25% extra enrolment.

The extended day system is an arrangement which permits the operation of classes which begin and end the school day at a different time of the day. The combination of flotation and extended day system will increase junior secondary enrolments by up to 50%. But this system is not recommended for senior forms.

iv) Bought places. This is the buying of places in the private sector to provide extra places to meet the needs as the building programme takes time to be carried through. In 1979 about 77,000 places will be bought.

v) Accommodation in primary schools. The gradual fall in primary school pupils population results in under utilized school premises in some areas. It is planned to link these premises to adjacent secondary schools to provide increased secondary level accommodation.

9. School building programme.

By 1983 a further 57 new schools will be required to provide sufficient places for children living in the New Towns and 51 extra new secondary schools are required in areas other than the New Towns. Altogether 161 new secondary schools will be required for the whole Colony.

10. Teacher training

It is proposed that as the demand for graduate teachers will be very great, trained non-graduate teachers will be teaching in the planned expansion of the junior secondary forms and future vacancies in these forms will be filled by trained non-graduate teachers. This implies that the school authorities should employ graduate teachers to teach in the senior secondary forms only.

Criticisms and comments on the White Paper

The White Paper on the development of secondary education in Hong Kong over the next ten years concentrates mainly on the expansion of secondary education with junior secondary education in particular.

Similar to the expansion policies in primary education in the fifties and seventies, the expansion seems to rely heavily on the aided and private sector. As expressed very clearly in the White Paper, section 3.1:

"...It is obvious this objective will be achieved only if there is the fullest co-operation by sponsors and school managements; past experience is such that the Government is sure that this will be forthcoming".

From Table 1 in the White Paper we can see that the proposed increases in subsidised places are mostly in subsidised or aided schools. The total increase in school places for Forms I - III between the years 1976 and 1979 is 86,945, out of which only 3,960 are places in the government schools. Besides, among the total number of new schools to be built by 1979, only 4 of them are government schools, the rest being aided or subsidised schools. This tremendous dependence on the aided and private sectors for expansion in education can be considered to be unhealthy and irresponsible. Time and again the government mentions the need for the co-operation from the aided and private sectors if the aims of providing universal junior secondary education are to be achieved. If ever the private non-profit-making and the private independent school places were not to be 'bought' by the government, the targets would never be able to be achieved by the

time-line. Clearly the adoption of this policy comes out of financial considerations. This is made plain at the very end of the White Paper where costs of expansion are listed out:

"... These are very substantial figures, and must be viewed against the background of escalating pressures from other social and community needs on our financial resources. The Government will make every effort to fulfil the ambitious educational targets set out in this Paper. But it has to be accepted that their fulfilment must be subject to a regular review of the overall resources available to the Government and of the share of them which properly can be made available for secondary education".

Education has never been accredited top priority by the government as compared to other projects on commercial and industrial developments. Any possibility of a recession and other priority areas call on public finances will delay the progress in education. Money, says the Governor, is the basic problem in implementing the 1974 White Paper⁽¹⁾.

As on the areas of public concern such as the much debated issues on the language of instruction and the improvement of the curriculum, the White Paper does not give any clear, definite guidelines. All decisions are left to the school authorities themselves. On the introduction and fostering of a liking for practical subjects, the White Paper states that "it will be left to the discretion of individual schools to increase the proportion of time devoted to them". On the language of instruction, "It is not intended to be more specific on this topic until full consultation with schools has taken place", though the debate has been going on for decades. On the quality of education, the White Paper is particularly vague. It is stated that "the Government is very much aware of the desirability of improving the quality of the education provided in our secondary schools". Then it goes on to say that an adequate supply of qualified teachers will be ensured and "the curriculum development committees will continue to examine syllabuses". One wonders how the quality of education can be effectively improved judging from these few lines representing the official policy on education. Nor has the White Paper made it clear how to go about providing "for the children of Hong Kong the standards of education which they need if they are to be properly

1. As reported in "Money key to education White Paper", South China Morning Post, 9.10.1975.

equipped to fend for themselves and serve their fellows in the competitive world of the next decade"⁽²⁾. Clearly, this White Paper falls short on considerations on the quality of education as a result of all the new proposals.

Despite the above mentioned weaknesses, the White Paper is a milestone in the history of Hong Kong secondary education. Besides the announcement of the objective of providing nine years of compulsory and free education for all, the importance of technical education was emphasised. It is the first time that practical and technical subjects are to be included in the curriculum and also to be fostered. This is commensurate with the idea that pupils should have an all-round, general education which helps to develop their potentials. In the past, a grammar school type of education with the sole aim of getting into the university was sought after by the majority of students. Now, the correct emphasis on technical education will help many of those pupils who will benefit more by pursuing a technical training course.

The abolition of the Secondary Schools Entrance Examination is much welcome by the public. As planned, the allocation of primary 6 leavers to secondary schools in the same area will eliminate much competition for 'prestigious' secondary schools. It is stated quite clearly in the White Paper that "A secondary school will be encouraged to avoid elitist admission policies and to accept pupils of all levels of ability". The implementation of new admission and allocation procedures will eventually put an end to the 'elitist' policy practised by some of the secondary schools. This is an inevitable change if a truly compulsory, free education for all is to be introduced. But it is foreseeable that there are hindrances as yet to be overcome in the development of secondary education.

Finally, the proposal of an introduction of a Junior Secondary School Certificate of Education Examination aroused great opposition from the public. Besides, the provisions for senior secondary education was considered to be very unsatisfactory. These led to the need of examining the government policy of senior secondary and tertiary education in the following years.

2. See Chapter 1, section 1.9 in the White Paper, 'Secondary Education in Hong Kong Over the Next Decade', 1974.

B.ii. Abolition of the Secondary School Entrance Examination (S.S.E.E.)

After sixteen years of operation, the much disliked but "efficient" system of selecting pupils for subsidised secondary school places, the Secondary School Entrance Examination was held for the last time in May 1977. It was abolished as a result of a secondary school place being made available for every primary school leaver as from September, 1978, when junior secondary education was also made free and compulsory.

The abolition of the S.S.E.E. is significant not only in the sense that primary six students no longer have to go through the torture of a once-and-for-all, competitive examination held in an afternoon in order to get a secondary school place in the public sector, but it points to the possibility of a more balanced, general primary education in the future.

In the past, even beginning as early as Primary four, students were made to concentrate their studies on English, Chinese and Mathematics which were the only subjects to be examined in the S.S.E.E. The teaching and learning of all other subjects were largely neglected and the learning of cultural subjects such as art and music sacrificed. Extra-curricular activities in Primary five and six were often reduced to the minimum. As a result, it was not surprising to find that even pupils belonging to the top bands, as selected by their S.S.E.E. results, might not necessarily possess good general knowledge simply because what they had been trained in the primary school were skills of passing examinations in English, Chinese and Mathematics only.

That the S.S.E.E. had dictated the primary education long enough could also be seen in its backwash on kindergarten and pre-school education. It was, and still is, generally thought that in order to be able to get into a "good" secondary school (which means you would have every chance of getting into the university), you would have to get into a "good" primary school (a feeder school even better) which would give you the best possible training to pass the S.S.E.E. Since there were too many applicants for entering into these "prestigious" primary schools, all sorts of entrance requirements, examinations or even bribery, were invented to select pupils from the Kindergarten to the primary schools⁽¹⁾. That meant right from

1. A Green Paper on Primary Education and Pre-primary Services was released in April, 1980 to make recommendations on provisions, teaching approach and also control on the discretionary entry into primary schools. The proposal of a new allocation scheme is still under debate. However, it is good to see the Government take action to try to deal with the problem of entrance into Primary one, though it cannot be dealt with in isolation of other problems such as the unevenness of primary schools standards.

the age of four or five, children were pushed into the struggle for survival - to get the best possible provision in education which would eventually pay, materially.

Though fees were abolished, the government primary schools were not admired by parents in the sixties and seventies, mainly because pupils were automatically promoted in these schools every year, and the results of the S.S.E.E. were less impressive than most other subsidised or private schools. What most parents in Hong Kong were after was a guarantee that the primary school they sent their children to could provide the best opportunity for their children to get a place in a five-year secondary course in a government or subsidised, if not elitist, grammar school. The social climate was such that if the child could not be allocated a secondary school place by the S.S.E.E., he was certainly considered a failure. Even the allocation of a place in the prevocational or modern school was taken as a "disappointment". For some, every effort would be made to secure a place in the grammar school in the private sector instead.

Now, with the abolition of the S.S.E.E., will the endless struggle come to an end? It will be optimistic, if not naive, to think so.

Firstly, the availability of a junior secondary school place for every child does not mean there is a place for everybody in the senior secondary forms. Only about 40% of the 15 - 16 age group will have subsidised education after Form 3 by 1979, as stipulated in the 1974 White Paper. Since subsidised places in the senior secondary forms are never sufficient in the years to come, nor are the standards of different secondary schools the same, some sort of selection is inevitable. Again, selection means examination, and examination means competition.

Secondly, the types of secondary schools are varied. As mentioned before, many parents, disregarding the interest and potentials of their children, prefer sending their children to certain "famous" (usually elitist) grammar schools. As the desires of all parents cannot be satisfied and also it is the policy of the government to 'even out' the academic standards of entrants to different secondary schools⁽²⁾, the primary school leavers will be allocated to different secondary schools by means of a new system called the (Junior) Secondary School Places Allocation Scheme, which replaces the S.S.E.E.

2. The policy is briefly mentioned in "Method of Allocating Form One Places", (Chinese edition), a pamphlet published by the Education Department to be given to parents.

The Secondary School Places Allocation System (S.S.P.A.S.)

The new system of allocation came into operation in 1978. This is not a compulsory system. All primary schools are invited to participate in this system for their current primary five pupils. The Primary six leavers of a participating school will be provided with a three-year free secondary school place, and "would have the privilege of choosing their secondary school but not so for non-participants"⁽³⁾. The system is based on internal assessment and parental choice of secondary schools.

There are essentially five main features of the new allocation system⁽⁴⁾.

1. Regionalisation:

The whole of Hong Kong is divided into 24 "school nets" based on the location of primary schools. Within each net is a right mix of different types of secondary school places in technical schools, government grammar schools, aided grammar schools, private non-profit-making grammar schools and private independent grammar schools. Pre-vocational schools are not limited to particular nets and their allocation will take place before the main allocation.

2. The establishment of a District Council in each net and a Central Committee to supervise the implementation of the system.

3. The system of allocation works in overlapping two-year cycles. Internal assessments were made by schools on all subjects except Physical Education and Religious Education in some schools at the end of the second term of Primary 5 and at the end of the first and second terms of Primary 6.

4. An Academic Aptitude Test (A.A.T.) is administered centrally to scale and monitor internal assessment in the first term of the Primary 6 year. The students will be tested on two papers: Verbal Reasoning and Numerical Reasoning.

5. Pupils are put into an order of merit according to their internal

3. "Primary Schools invited to join Junior Secondary School Places Allocation Scheme", Daily Information Bulletin, 12.10.1979, pp.1-2.

4. Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, pp.21-22.

assessments which have already been scaled by the A.A.T. The order of merit is divided into five bands with pupils of Band 1 being the first to be allocated a place in one of the 30 schools chosen by their parents. The allocation is done by computer based on the choice of schools.

The first A.A.T. was held on 6th December, 1977. The whole system was scheduled to be reviewed in 1980.

The introduction of this new scheme is not particularly welcome to some of the parents. Similar to the S.S.E.E., the Secondary Schools Places Allocation Scheme offers parents a choice of 30 secondary schools. However, as explained in the pamphlet, "Method of Allocating Form One Places", all the pupils within one band will be given a "Random Number" which will be selected randomly by the computer to allocate a certain number of pupils among those who have opted for the same school but there are evidently not enough places to offer. Any student who has not been randomly selected for a school of his first choice will have the computer 'read' his second choice and make another selection for him among another group of pupils who happen to choose the same school. The process will repeat until the pupil is finally allocated a place in one of the 30 schools of his (or his parent's) choice.

What will possibly happen in this procedure is that even a pupil of a higher band, say band 1, may not be allocated a school of his first choice, or second, or even third, simply because of the random selection by the computer. On the other hand, a pupil of the same band may be so lucky as to be selected right away and allocated the school of his first choice. That is to say, it is likely that the new entrants to any secondary school may come from any of the five bands and hence the ability levels will be varied. This is exactly what annoys the parents and worries the teachers and school authorities. Many secondary schools are now experiencing the very substantial changes in the range of academic ability of their intake.

There are already reports on a general drop in standards among the Form one students. Many principals attributed the drop in standards, particularly English, to the new system of allocation and the Academic Aptitude Test⁽⁵⁾ which only tests Chinese and Mathematics but not English

5. See comments in "Principal warns of falling standards", South China Morning Post, 29.11.1978, and "Aptitude test critic warns of lowering standards", South China Morning Post, 4.2.1980.

(as compared to the S.S.E.E.). As a result of the change to a new system, many primary schools are concentrating on preparing their pupils for the Chinese and Mathematics tests only. Thus, not only the usual subjects in the curriculum are neglected but also English. Such an examination-conscious attitude toward education clearly reflects the futility on the part of the Government of trying to reduce the examination pressure of pupils by introducing a new system which creates the same effects as its predecessor did. Worse still, with the introduction of compulsory education, the Form one pupils are described as "lacking in discipline and traditional Chinese incentive to work hard"⁽⁶⁾. Understandably, the more academic-orientated schools having the grammar school tradition will feel the greatest shock as a result of the change of the ability levels in their Form one students. Under the new system, their admission of students is comparatively beyond their control for now, even the brightest pupils may not be allocated to these schools though they themselves want to; and the schools cannot refuse entry of these students whom they do not want to accept. This is criticised by Fr. Joseph Carra as ignoring the "right of parents to select the schools and the kind of education they wish to have for their children" and also "the Education Department has taken away the right of schools to choose their own pupils"⁽⁷⁾.

That the new system brings about a lowering of standards worries the teachers most. The mixed abilities found in the Form one students pose problems for the teachers who have to find new methods and approaches to teaching them. For those who are pessimistic, it is predicted that "in five to ten years' time the quality of undergraduates at our two universities and the polytechnic may be of a lower calibre"⁽⁸⁾. This worry is not unfounded as the present provisions in the secondary schools have not been able to cater for the change in these years. Much improvement is needed. As expressed strongly by Rev. Joyce Bennett:

"We must understand the problems involved in enforcing compulsory education when the schools are inadequately staffed and the standards of the schools uneven. This bill (Education (Amendment) Bill, 1979) is one stage on Hong Kong's way to better educational facilities. I

6. "Compulsory Education - Hindrances must be overcome", a draft speech by Rev. Hon. Joyce Bennett at the Legislative Council. Printed in Daily Information Bulletin, 9.5.1979, p.9.
7. "Is education policy inadequate?", Campus, 10.12.1979.
8. Says Mrs. Symons, the Headmistress of the Diocesan Girls' School, as reported in "Aptitude test critic warns of lowering standards," South China Morning Post, 4.2.1980.

support it in the belief that the improvements for which I call in staffing must come. I do not accept the Financial Secretary's comment that I have expensive ideas on education. I am asking only for necessary improvements in our educational system so that our schools will be worth compelling parents to send their children to" (9)

Taking into account of the existing number of available private secondary school places and the general affluence of the Hong Kong society it is not genuinely a question of a lack of secondary school places that has driven the Hong Kong pupils to the pressures of examinations and competition. I would tend to think that the problem lies in the lack of good, adequate facilities as well as high academic standards in the majority of secondary schools. If the standards of most sub-standard secondary schools cannot be improved, the competition for secondary places in certain "good" secondary schools will continue and the pressure on pupils will never be lessened no matter what kind of allocation and assessment systems are introduced by the Government.

9. Draft speech by Rev. Hon. Joyce Bennett at the Legislative Council. See Daily Information Bulletin, 9.5.1979, p.9.

B.iii. 1978 White Paper, 'Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education.'

After the publication of the 1974 White Paper and its proposals being implemented, the Government considered that she was at last in a position to make major advances and improvement on the education system. Steps were taken to review the provision of education beyond the Form 3 level, especially at a time when public opposition was strong towards the introduction of another public examination for the selection of students for post-Form 3 places.

In November, 1977 a Green Paper 'Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education: a development programme for Hong Kong over the next decade' was published which put forward proposals on the development of education beyond the nine-year course up to the year 1986. The Green Paper aroused very great public concern for it not only makes proposals for a further step in the provision of education but it also seeks to improve the overall structure of the education system. After consultations had been made and recommendations and comments from different sectors of the community received, a White Paper, 'Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education' was finally published in October 1978, nearly a whole year after the publication of the Green Paper.

Having taken the public's views on some of the issues into consideration, the White Paper has made a lot of improvements over the proposals of the Green Paper.

The principal recommendations of the White Paper are as follows:⁽¹⁾

1. Education beyond Form 3

The White Paper seeks to expand subsidised places in senior secondary forms (Forms 4-5) in technical institutes and adult education centres to the full extent of demand from suitable students by the early 1980's.

The number of subsidised senior secondary places⁽²⁾ for the Form 3 leavers will be increased to 57,000, about 60% of the 15 year-old population in 1981, and over 70% by 1986. About 12,700 places on first-year courses at post-Form 3 level will be provided in the technical institutes

1. See also the statement by the Director of Education, 'White Paper - Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education' in Legislative Council on 18.10.1978.

2. See Appendix I in 1978 White Paper, p.21.

in 1981. Taking into account all subsidised places in Form 4 in schools, in technical institutes, in adult education centres and so on, about 75% of the 15 year-old population in 1981 will have either full-time or part-time post-Form 3 education. As there will be an expected decline in the size of the 15 year-old age group, the Form 4 places provided in 1981 will be available for about 74% of the 15 year-old population in 1986 while the overall provision rate will become 97% in 1986.

The increase in senior secondary places will be achieved mainly through the Schools Building Programme. A total number of 102 new secondary schools, including converted primary schools, will have been completed by 1981. Extensions to existing schools will also be built and more places will be obtained by changing the class structure of a number of schools to operate more senior secondary forms.

Additional senior secondary places will be bought in private non-profit making schools. These schools, provided that they are suitable and willing, will be brought by stages within the full scheme of assistance provided under a common Code of Aid. Some existing private independent schools may also be included within the scheme if they adopt non-profit-making status and their facilities and operating standards are satisfactory.

2. Sixth Form Education

The Government will continue to subsidise sixth-form places for up to one-third of students entering subsidised Form 4 places two years previously.

It is recognised that not all students who complete the sixth-form course will be able to proceed to higher education but still a well-designed course would be beneficial to these students. A Committee on Sixth Form Education⁽³⁾ was appointed to consider how the Sixth-Form curriculum could be broadened. Its work is expected to be completed by March 1979.

3. Tertiary Education

The annual growth rate of 3% was proposed for the two universities after 1981. It will be reviewed during the 1980's.

The Government will ask the universities to prepare proposals for part-

3. A Report, 'Sixth Form Education in Hong Kong' was issued on 28.12.1977 to make proposals on the broadening of the curriculum in Form 6. But it was stressed by the Director of Education that this Report gave the views of the informal Working Committee only and did not reflect any government or Education Department Policy.

time degree courses for mature students. It is hoped that by the mid-1980's there will be about 1,000 students on these courses.

The Polytechnic will be asked to consider the possibility of a limited degree programme. In order to provide for the expansion of technician and commercial education, the Government proposes that the Polytechnic will concentrate on providing courses at the Higher Diploma and Higher Certificate levels and the technical institutes take over ordinary Diploma and Certificate courses.

There will be six technical institutes all located in major centres of population and industry. Their function will remain the provision of craft-level courses, with enrolments reaching 33,000. It is intended that their facilities, which may be further expanded through the building of extensions, should be at the same standard as similar courses in the Polytechnic. There will also be a close liaison between the Polytechnic and the technical institutes in the planning of courses and the development of a common credit-unit system to facilitate more flexibility in the provision of technical education.

4. Post-secondary Colleges

The expansion programmes for sixth-form and tertiary education are to be achieved partly through the post-secondary colleges.

Financial assistance will be provided to these colleges in respect of places on two-year courses at sixth-form level and on subsequent two-year courses directed towards professional and vocational qualifications.

Students on the two-year post Form 6 courses will also be eligible to apply for grants and loans.

The colleges, while retaining the status of private institutions with considerable freedom to determine their curriculum and syllabuses, may choose to accept Government financial support in return for the restructuring of their courses; or, retain their present form of courses and awards in which case no financial assistance will be given.

5. Adult Education

Secondary education courses run by the Education Department's Adult Education Section will be expanded and facilities improved. These courses will eventually be able to cover the full senior secondary curriculum with effect from September, 1979.

Retrieval adult education courses will also be developed through the voluntary agencies which provide courses complementing and supplementing those provided by the Education Department. A scheme of subvention is accordingly introduced to give assistance to these voluntary agencies.

6. Improving the quality of secondary education

The Government emphasises her concern with the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of education. The Government's responsibility extends mainly to providing adequate resources for accommodation, for the employment of trained teachers and other professional staff, for the use of teaching aids and for the promotion of pre-service and in-service training schemes (5.1).

It is the intention of the Government to phase out bought places in Forms 1-3 in those private independent schools whose operations do not meet the desired standards. On the other hand, the Government proposes to raise to full-aid status those private non-profit-making schools which are suitable and willing.

Good curriculum design will be encouraged. A broader curriculum in Forms 4-5 is required which will encourage the teaching of practical and technical subjects such as Art and Design, Ceramics, Design and Technology, Home Economics, Dressmaking and Commerce.

In order to support schools which offer practical and technical subjects but lacking sufficient resources, the Government proposes to construct two centrally-located workshops whose facilities will be shared by these schools. These workshops are planned for completion by September, 1980.

Various improvements will be made to the support facilities and services available in schools. One example is the development of school libraries as resource centres under the direction of teacher-librarians. Programmes produced by the Education television (E.T.V.) for junior secondary curriculum will be expanded and improved.

The Education Department will initiate a pilot project to establish small working teams of teachers seconded from their schools to prepare model teaching programmes and supporting materials. This is an impetus to curriculum innovation.

Teacher training will be improved. It has now decided that students who enter the Colleges of Education with Certificate of Education qualifications only will be required to take a three-year, instead of two-year, training

course. However, those who have obtained Form 6 qualification may be admitted directly to a two-year college course, provided their language proficiency is adequate.

It is not proposed to make post-graduate training obligatory for graduate teachers entering the teaching profession. However, a strong inducement will be provided to those graduates who tend to make teaching their permanent career. A course of teacher training will be required before teachers are eligible for promotion.

In both pre-service and in-service courses, it will be the aim to improve and develop the proficiency in language and communication skills. An English Language Adviser from the British Council was invited to prepare proposals for raising the standards of English within schools and teacher training programmes. Specialised facilities for the training of non-graduate teachers of English will be considered. For the improvement of the proficiency in English among graduate students of the University Schools of Education, proposals are made for the development of an English Language Unit in each of the Schools of Education.

7. Financial implications of the programmes

The implementation of the proposals in the White Paper requires a very large expenditure⁽⁴⁾. The cumulative additional recurrent expenditure for the whole of the planning period will be over \$640 million. Thus, stressed the Director in the Legislative Council:

"...I must therefore draw attention to the possibility, however slight, that we may not be able to achieve all our targets on time. Much will depend on Hong Kong's continued prosperity ..."⁽⁵⁾

From this statement we can understand that education is not and has not been taken as a priority by the Government.

It is not the intention of the White Paper to extend free education beyond the basic nine years. Education at the senior secondary and tertiary level will continue to be voluntary and charge fees. The White Paper also proposes that standard fees in Forms 4, 5 and 6 will be increased, and the

4. See Appendix II 'Financial implications of the programmes' in the White Paper. '1978 White Paper', p.23.

5. See statement by Mr. Kenneth Topley, Director of Education, 'White Paper - The Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education' in Legislative Council, 18.10.1978.

new fees represent a modest increase in the contribution from parents toward the education of the children after their nine-year, free, compulsory education.

Criticisms and comments on the proposals of the White Paper

The White Paper has made important advancement over the Green Paper in that it does plan to increase the number of subsidised senior secondary places substantially beyond the original target proposed in the Green Paper. By doing so, it brings the "long-term goal" of providing universal senior secondary places closer to reality. With the increasing number of post-Form 3 places being available, the system of selection at the end of Form 3 will not become a major 'hurdle' for students and, hopefully, the quality of the junior secondary school curriculum will not be affected.

In view of the great diversity of the structure and standards of the private independent schools, it is welcome that the government will stop buying places in the sub-standard private independent schools. The inclusion of some private non-profit-making schools into the full scheme of aid will certainly help to raise their standards of school facilities and the qualifications of the teachers employed. In the long run the improvement of these private, non-profit-making schools will be able to keep their standard in line with the other subsidised schools. As secondary schools in general are becoming more or less uniform in standards, it will not be necessary for students to compete for places in a particular type of school. Hence all the selection procedures will be free from the competitive element in the future.

Significantly different from the past White Papers on education, the 1978 White Paper devotes a whole chapter (Chapter 5) on improving the quality of education. Though there is no explicit definition of the quality of education in the White Paper, it is briefly mentioned under the 'guidelines for future action' : "The content and quality of education should be such as would promote greater adaptability, proficiency in a wide range of technical skills, broad perspectives, and the capacity to think logically and to communicate effectively" (3.6 vi).

One of the aims to improve the quality of education is to broaden the curriculum, mainly to encourage the teaching of practical and technical subjects. The provision of these practical and technical subjects in schools

will offer a wider opportunity for pupils to choose the subjects which suit their potentials and aptitudes. This is seen as a necessary preparation for young people to adapt to the economic and industrial demands of our society. Seen in the context of Hong Kong, the development of technical education may be regarded as commendable or even indispensable. This is implied by Hon. Q.W. Lee when he was expounding the proposals of the Green Paper:⁽⁶⁾

"In Hong Kong we are aware that our prime asset is its population. We have no natural resources, not even space. An important duty of the Government therefore is to cultivate this asset to the best advantage of the community in the light of the direction of our development and growth which is so clearly dependent on industry and trade. It follows therefore that our future education should be planned to meet the needs of such development. This means that we have to put greater weight to manpower training for which I think we should not be apologetic so long as by doing so we do not neglect the moral and intellectual goals of education."

It is then clear that the broadening of the curriculum toward a greater practical and technical content is closely associated with the strong demands of commerce and industry for a work-force which is highly adaptive to the ever-changing technological world. Thus in Hong Kong, the education of young people is conceived of as job-training for industries and trade. A look at the employment situation will tell us that the manufacturing sector is still the largest employer which employs over 40% of the total number of work-force; while the commercial and financial sectors continue to grow rapidly in the seventies and early eighties. If Hong Kong is to maintain its growth in industries and commerce, we need a well-trained work-force to cope with the rapid technological changes in the eighties.

Such an emphasis on economic needs has led many people, mainly the educators, to think that the government is "more concerned about training a work-force than giving our children an all-round education"⁽⁷⁾. If education is indeed geared toward the economic needs of the society only, in the case of Hong Kong where there is no overt, official philosophy of education, this is something we really need to guard against. The White Paper does mention the Government's intention to help schools to realise their prime functions of helping children to acquire 'a lively interest in the world around them and an ability to think for themselves and make decisions' (5.2 i), as well as 'a basis of mathematical, scientific and

6. Speech given in the Legislative Council, 5.7.1978.

7. Commented by Mr. Alex Wu in the Legislative Council debate on the Green Paper, July, 1978.

technical knowledge and skill to prepare them for the fast-changing, highly technological society in which they will live and work' (5.2 vi). However, the White Paper has concentrated mainly on making provisions for realizing the latter function but falls short of making concrete proposals as to how the former function can be realised. A sound, all-round secondary education needs to have a right balance between the attainment of practical skills and the cultivation of students' moral, cultural and intellectual life.

Moreover, the emphasis on the improvement of the teaching of English but no mention of Chinese has given us the impression that the economic value of education is greatly stressed.

Some of the policies proposed as means to increase senior secondary school places are working contrary to the aim of improving the quality of education. It is highly disputable that flotation "represents an efficient use of school space, without any sacrifice in quality" (4.8). When all the space in the school, classrooms, special rooms, laboratories, library and lecture hall, is taken up for lessons, it is very unlikely that pupils can develop a sense of belonging for their own class, or even their school since there is no assigned place for them for various activities⁽⁸⁾. Imagine that students keep changing their rooms throughout the school day, how can they possibly know one another and how can the teachers know the students well enough and long enough in order to establish the kind of satisfactory pupil-teacher relationship? What about the creation of a healthy ethos in the school?

The approved class size of 40 (4.12) in the secondary schools will just make the improvement of teaching impossible. The problem of large class size coupled with the lack of spare rooms in the school militate against the adoption of a pupil-centred, group-approach or activity-approach in teaching. Under these conditions of learning, perhaps only 'chalk and talk' will prevail.

The White Paper mentions another means of improving the quality of education which is raising the entry qualifications for students entering the Colleges of Education. This is relatively insignificant compared to the need of raising the quality of training actually provided in the

8. A full account of the disadvantages is related by Don Reynolds, "Dropping Quality in drive for Quantity", South China Morning Post, 13.11.1978.

Colleges of Education. The present staffing of the colleges of education has been criticised by Miss Bennett as having "too many non-graduates, too many staff changes and not enough use made of overseas trained staff"⁽⁹⁾ Yet the government has not made any substantial improvement besides making the promise that 63% of the total posts in the colleges of education will be held by graduates. Furthermore, there is no concrete proposal as to how more graduate teachers can be attracted and remain in the profession. The Director of Education seems to be quite satisfied with the supply of graduate teachers so long as "a class size of 40 being maintained"^(5.19).

The insufficiency of secondary school teachers can be reflected in the pupil-teacher ratio (as at 1977/78)⁽¹⁰⁾ :

	<u>No. of teachers</u>	<u>No. of pupils</u>	<u>Pupil/teacher ratio</u>
Government schools	1,122	23,875	21.3
Grant schools	945	23,081	24.4
Subsidised schools	3,239	85,153	26.2
Private schools	8,763	288,526	32.9

If there is no further plan of expanding teacher training in the coming years, the shortage of teachers (qualified) will become more serious as junior and senior secondary education continues to expand in the eighties.

Selection and Allocation

Since the announcement in the 1974 White Paper of a public examination for Form 3 students, there have been strong opposition from almost all sectors of the society. The so-called Junior Secondary School Certificate of Education Examination was thought of as having worse effects than the abolished S.S.E.E. for it would lead to a distortion of the junior secondary curriculum and also undesirable competition for senior secondary places. Facing tremendous pressure for change, the government abandoned the idea of introducing a public examination at the end of Form 3 in 1978. However, still pressed with the need for some sort of selection for "suitable" students into Form 4 the government devised a Junior Secondary Education Assessment System⁽¹¹⁾ which will be introduced in 1981.

9. Debate on the Green Paper, July 1978

10. Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, p.35.

11. "Junior Secondary Education Assessment System", General Schools Miscellaneous Circular No. 115/79, Education Department, Hong Kong, 16.11.1979.

The system of selection and allocation for subsidised senior secondary places is mainly based on internal assessments in a range of subjects, scaled by a test in the basic subjects of English, Chinese and Mathematics. The decision to limit the tests to these 3 subjects was made in the belief that this would be the best way to avoid distortion of the curriculum. It was considered that the tests on these subjects were to foster the teaching of skills rather than the content; thus there would be less rigidity in the course and less pressure to perform well in examinations.

The Scaling Test is curriculum oriented and individual results will not be counted in the allocation process. It is hoped that by doing so it will encourage the development of a balanced curriculum in schools. The parents will be required to choose fifteen schools from amongst a territory-wide list of schools which provide subsidised Form 4 places. For allocation, an order of merit is drawn up based on the aggregate scaled academic total of internal assessments. Places will be allocated in accordance with the order of merit and parental choice of school. The process will be carried out by computer. A certificate, known as the Hong Kong Junior Certificate of Education, will be issued to each participating pupil. The certificate will consist of two parts: the standard achieved by the pupil in each subject and an assessment by the school of the pupil's personal qualities and activities. The system will be reviewed before 1983 and in the meantime research into the procedures continues to be carried out.

Though this new allocation system is more preferable to the junior secondary public examination, it still creates certain problems. Basically it is a selective system to allocate pupils to different schools with subsidised post-Form 3 places. It is likely that the pupil of one school may be selected for a subsidised Form 4 place but in a different school which may differ a great deal in terms of school environment. That means the pupil has to adapt himself again not only to a new curriculum but new surroundings. It is noted that there will be a wide variety of curricula and teaching approaches adopted in Forms one to three in different schools. As a result, the relationship between academic aptitude and performance in each particular curriculum are will differ from school to school⁽¹²⁾. In view of this unfair allocation may result.

12. See comment in "Brimer criticises future student allocation system", Campus, 10.12, 1979, p.1.

Even provided that there will be sufficient senior secondary school places for all, the selection process still has to be adopted for, at least in the present time, the majority of pupils prefer to follow a grammar school course to a technical course of secondary education, not to mention to enter apprenticeship right after Form 3. As the Director of Education rightly remarks, the solution therefore "lies not only with those responsible for educational provision, but with the community at large and with industry in particular" and that "employment and training in industry will have to become more attractive in rewards and in condition of work"⁽¹³⁾. This is true that if the status and rewards for those industrial workers, technicians and apprentices cannot be raised substantially, the majority of secondary students will be forced to strive for more academic or higher education which will bring much better earning power in the society of Hong Kong. This is imperative that the improvement of education can never be achieved in isolation of other social and economic factors.

13. Speech by Mr. Kenneth Topley in Legislative Council on 2.8.1978

The Technical Education Division of the Education Department was re-organised in 1970 to become a separate division. It is the main body responsible for the technical education of Hong Kong. Also, the establishment of the private technical schools was encouraged. The Technical Education Division has been working closely with the industry and the community to improve the status and rewards of industrial workers, technicians and apprentices. It has been working closely with the industry and the community to improve the status and rewards of industrial workers, technicians and apprentices.

The first technical institute, the Hong Kong Technical Institute, was established in 1970. By 1977 there were 11 technical institutes offering courses in engineering, electronics, mechanical engineering, textile technology, printing, commercial studies and general studies. The institutes provide a two-year course leading to a diploma or certificate. The institutes provide a two-year course leading to a diploma or certificate. The institutes provide a two-year course leading to a diploma or certificate.

In 1977 there were 11 technical institutes with 11,000 students. The institutes provide a two-year course leading to a diploma or certificate. The institutes provide a two-year course leading to a diploma or certificate. The institutes provide a two-year course leading to a diploma or certificate.

1. Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Report, p. 7.

2. Ibid.

B.iv. Vocational and Technical Education

The seventies mark the shift of emphasis in Hong Kong education from one of an academic-oriented, grammar school tradition to one of vocational and technical, general education. This "shift" also reflects the changed economic base of Hong Kong from being an entrepot to an international manufacturing and commercial centre.

At a time when industries and commerce in Hong Kong began to 'take off' in the early sixties, demands on technical education have since been growing strong. The first major step in the development of technical education began when the government decided to form the Polytechnic Board which took over the Hong Kong Technical College to form the nucleus of the new Polytechnic which was formally established in 1972. From then on, other developments began to take place in the technical secondary schools, technical institutes and pre-vocational schools. (The overall course structure of technical education is shown in Figure II).

Development of the Technical Institutes

The Technical Education Division of the Education Department was re-organised in order to assume a greater co-ordination role in the running of the Technical Institutes. Also, the administration of the pre-vocational schools was transferred to the Schools' Division and the technical subjects inspectors became part of the Advisory Inspectorate in the Education Department⁽¹⁾.

The first technical institute, Morrison Hill Technical Institute, was built in 1970. By 1977 there were altogether three technical institutes offering courses in eight major areas : construction, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, textile industries, clothing industries, printing, commercial studies and general studies. These courses are provided at craft and technician levels on a full-time, block release, part-time day-release and evening basis. A number of short courses are also offered to meet the specialised requirements of industry and commerce.

In 1977 there were 1000 graduates from full-time courses, 500 part-time day courses and over 1800 from part-time evening courses⁽²⁾.

1. Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, p.7.

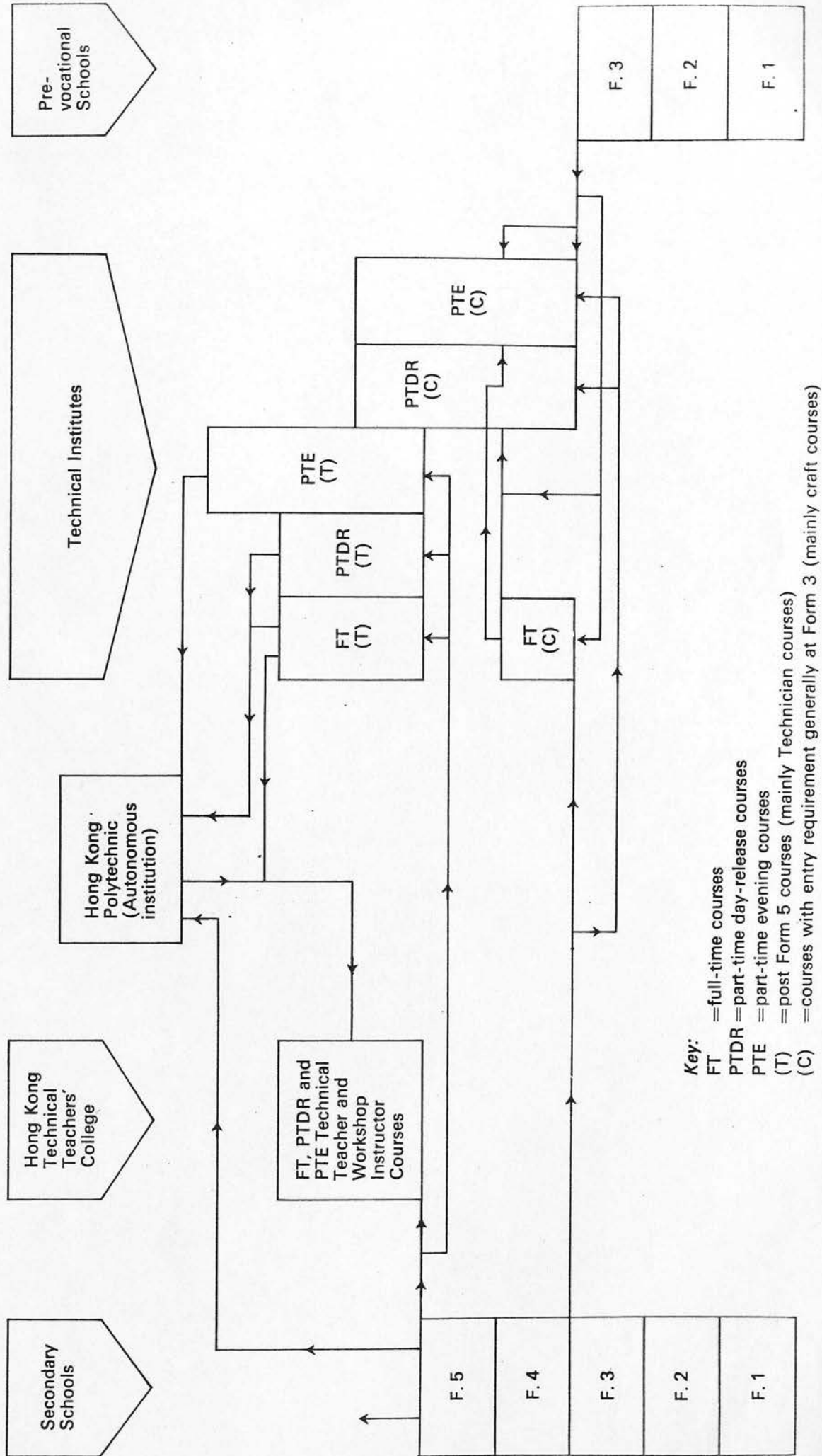
2. Ibid.



FIGURE II

COURSE STRUCTURE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION UNDER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

(The technical institutes and the Technical Teachers' College are administered under the Technical Education Division. The secondary schools and pre-vocational schools are under the School Division.)



(Source: Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, Education Department, H.K.)

The fourth technical institute, Haking Wong Technical Institute, was in operation starting in September 1977. It offers courses in five major fields, two of which, namely marine and fabrication, as well as hotel-keeping and tourism studies, are new subjects offered in Hong Kong.

The fifth technical institute will be officially opened in May 1980 and the sixth one will also be opened in the near future. During the first term of the 1979-80 academic year, there were some 3,000 full-time, 7,500 part-time day and 14,000 part-time evening students⁽³⁾, which show a substantial rise in enrolment numbers over the past few years.

In line with the government's policy of integrating the disabled into the community, about 100 places were provided in technical institutes during the 1979-80 academic year to cater for handicapped students in various standard courses.

Further expansion in the number of places in technical institutes is necessary. It is planned that in the eighties, there will have to be 152 workshops and 78 Technical Drawing Offices⁽⁴⁾.

The provision of courses and the usefulness of these courses provided by the technical institutes have often been under the review of the Hong Kong Training Council. The views of employers as well as other organizations are also taken into consideration so that the courses offered can meet the demands of industry and commerce. The main emphasis is now on the provision of part-time day release craft courses.

The government has taken steps to encourage employers to develop their workers' potentials by giving opportunities for them to attend part-time day-release courses in technical institutions. By the Apprentice Ordinance, 1976, the employers are required by law to send their craft apprentices in 23 designated trades to the technical institutes for complementary technical education. As a result, enrolment in part-time day-release craft courses rose to almost 4,000 in 1977-78, which was an increase of nearly 160% over 1976-77⁽⁵⁾. Another regulation specifying that those apprentices under 19 years of age in 36 designated trades have to attend part-time

3. Hong Kong 1980, p.67.

4. Director of Education, op.cit., p.17.

5. Ibid., p.8.

day-release courses also leads to a great demand for more places in these courses. The number of enrolment rose from 600 in 1970 to 6,200 in 1978-79⁽⁶⁾. This provision of technical education for apprentices is one of the recommendations made by the Hong Kong Training Council's Committee on Technical Training Institutions following a survey of part-time day-release courses published in October 1979. Some of the recommendations include:

1. Technical institutions, relevant government departments and training boards of the Council should regularly assess the training needs of industry and review the merit of part-time day-release courses to ensure that they can meet the needs of industry.
2. Special remedial classes should be run by the Education Department to raise the standard of some apprentices to the required level.
3. Sufficient places in relevant part-time day-release courses should be made available for apprentices.
4. Major employers' associations should encourage their members to organise apprentice training and make use of the facilities in technical institutes⁽⁷⁾.

The Polytechnic

As recommended by the White Paper on the Development of Senior Secondary and Tertiary Education, some of the Polytechnic's diploma and certificate programmes were transferred to the technical institutes run by the Education Department and the Polytechnic will concentrate on the provision of higher level technology and professional courses.

Since 1972, the numbers of students and staff have been increasing rapidly. In the 1979-80 academic year, there were about 7,100 full-time, 3,300 part-time day-release and 15,000 part-time evening students.

In order to provide for additional accommodation there is a three-phased campus development programme. The last phase will have been completed by October, 1980. Extensive rehabilitation and conversion work was also carried out to provide additional teaching facilities.

At present, the polytechnic offers full-time, sandwich, part-time day-release and part-time evening programmes leading to the awards of

6. "Technical Education suits the needs of industry", Daily Information Bulletin, 1.10.1979 (Chinese ed.), p.1.
7. "Technical Courses help develop workers' potentials", Daily Information Bulletin, 13.10.1979, p.4.

associateship, advanced higher diploma, higher diploma, diploma, higher certificate, certificate and other professional qualifications. These are mainly technical and commercial subjects. Starting from 1981, the polytechnic will offer twelve degree courses⁽⁸⁾. The proposals on the development of the Polytechnic in the years 1981-84 have already been submitted to the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee. The planned twelve degree courses are said to meet the demands of an industrial society. These courses are bachelor degree courses in Business Studies; Industrial Design; Textiles; Building Technology and Management; Manufacturing Engineering with Materials Technology; Civil Engineering; Mechanical Engineering; Electronic Engineering; Electrical Engineering; Building Services Engineering; Applied Science and Mathematics, and Degree in Social Work. It is expected that in the third year of its development, there will be 1000 students in these degree courses, which accounts for about 13 per cent of the total number of students in the Polytechnic.

Teacher Training

The training of technical teachers is provided by the Hong Kong Technical Teachers' College which is administered by the Education Department. The full-time courses are provided for training teachers for secondary schools, pre-vocational schools and technical institutes. There are also in-service courses for teachers in technical institutes and the Polytechnic which lead to a Certificate in Technical Education. The College also provides a variety of in-service courses for teacher training and courses for supervisors and instructors employed by industry. New short courses on many topics have been run for serving teachers which included 'Practical work for teachers of Handicapped Children', 'The use of the laboratory in teaching Engineering Science' and 'Management in Education'⁽⁹⁾.

It has been recognised that with the rapid expansion of secondary education, the demand of qualified teachers well exceeds the supply. It was suggested that to raise the standard of teachers of technical subjects the Technical Teachers' College should take into its courses Higher Certificate or Higher Diploma holders from the Polytechnic⁽¹⁰⁾. However,

8. Reported in the Chinese newspaper, Wah Kiu Yat Po, 18.4.1980.
9. Director of Education, op.cit., p.10.
10. It was suggested by Mr. James Wu in the Legislative Council debate on the Green Paper, July 1978.

it was pointed out that since there are more attractive avenues open to these people with such qualifications, it is difficult to attract them into the teaching profession in the technical institutes. In view of the future needs of the society, it is imperative that the government should pay more attention to teacher training especially its quality. But judging from the proposals in the White Paper (1978), there seems to be few concrete steps to encourage more graduates to enter this profession. Besides, the expenditure for colleges of education as proposed by the White Paper shows a substantial reduction over that proposed by the Green Paper for 1985-86, (from \$34.7 million down to \$29.6 million). Thus it is hard to understand how the government can improve and expand teacher education in real terms.

B.v. Changes in the Curriculum

Following the implementation of the 1974 and 1978 White Papers, the curriculum in the secondary school has undergone significant changes.

In the junior secondary forms, all pupils follow a common-core curriculum of general education of which 25 to 30 per cent is allocated to practical subjects. A pamphlet entitled 'A Preliminary Guide to the Curriculum for Junior Secondary Forms' was issued in 1975 by the Education Department on behalf of the Curriculum Development Committee to assist schools in implementing the first stages of the common-core curriculum⁽¹⁾.

The constituent subjects of the new curriculum are: Chinese, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Chinese History, Art and Design, Home Economics, Design and Technology, Physical Education, Music and Ethical/Religious Education. The main difference in the new curriculum is the introduction of Social Studies, instead of three separate subjects - Geography, Economics and History - and new practical subjects like Arts and Design and Design and Technology. It is seen that the new curriculum is not so academically oriented as the old one. What is more, students who are going to work in the industrial field can have the opportunity to prepare themselves before they leave school. It is considered by the Curriculum Development Committee that the syllabuses are "to provide a balanced curriculum, meeting both the educational and personal requirements of the pupils and the social needs of the community"⁽²⁾. The new syllabuses are also intended to promote the quality of secondary education by discouraging old-fashioned methods of instruction, and encouraging the adoption of a more stimulating approach to learning. Included in the new syllabuses are helpful advice on teaching methodology, subject organisation and the sequence of teaching items. For example, in the Provisional syllabus for English, an 'oral-structural' approach to modern language is encouraged whereas in the junior secondary integrated science curriculum, a guided enquiry approach is suggested to encourage students "to be observant and be ready to face the challenge of present day environmental contamination".

For those schools which did not have sufficient resources to implement the common-core curriculum in full, interim measures were taken to help

1. "Details of Common-core Curriculum for Junior Secondary Forms", Daily Information Bulletin, 13.5.1975, p.2.
2. Stated in the Preamble of the Provisional Syllabus for English, p.vii

them in bridging the gap between their present curricula and the new curriculum. One of these measures was the issue of interim syllabuses. Practical help was also given by the Advisory Inspectorate to these schools through visits and supporting materials.

All of the common-core syllabuses for Forms 1 - 3 were issued initially as provisional syllabuses which were subject to modification during the trial period. Evaluation of these provisional syllabuses would take place before the detailed new syllabuses were finally produced.

The Educational Television Service (E.T.V.), which was established in 1971 under the Education Department, produces programmes based on syllabuses used in primary and junior secondary schools. These programmes are meant to complement classroom teaching. Programmes produced for the junior secondary school cover subject areas of Chinese, English, Mathematics and Social Studies.

With the expansion of technical education, technical subjects grow in importance. In 1977-78, 34 schools with facilities for woodwork and metal work had their workshop re-designed in order to adopt a Design and Technology approach to the teaching of technical subjects. And, for the first time, a list of subjects entitled "Engineering Science" is included at 'A' level. These subjects will be introduced in 1980/81⁽³⁾. At the Hong Kong Certificate of Education level, 'Electronics and Electricity' will also be included in the technical subjects. The syllabus for this subject has already been developed.

Courses, conferences, seminars and workshops have been organised regularly for teachers to introduce and evaluate the new curricula and various approaches to teaching. Since the implementation of the Junior Secondary Curriculum in 1976-77, the feedback has been reported as 'encouraging'⁽⁴⁾. It will have to take some time before the full effect of the new curriculum can be assessed and whether its aim of improving the quality of secondary education can be achieved.

As for the senior secondary forms, teaching syllabuses at Form 4 and Form 5 were also examined and revised. The introduction of Art and Design and Commercial subjects enables students to follow relevant technical

3. Director of Education, 1977-78 Annual Summary, p.17.

4. Ibid., p.12.

and commercial courses in the technical institutes and the Polytechnic after their secondary education. In 1983, a computer training course will be first introduced in the Form 4 and 5 curriculum.

The proposal of broadening the Form 4 - 5 curriculum referred to in the 1978 White Paper confines mainly to the requirement of taking at least one practical or technical subject by students in Forms 4 and 5. Besides, it is made clear that "the Government does not intend to depart from the present practice of leaving decisions on the curriculum to the schools themselves, but will encourage schools to offer practical and technical subjects, by providing the necessary resources" (5.8). It is questionable whether the schools themselves will take up an active role in encouraging the students to take up practical and technical subjects in the senior secondary forms while the government herself is reluctant to decide how far it should go in incorporating practical subjects into the senior secondary curriculum. We have to take also into account the fact that those students who have "survived" the Junior Secondary School Allocation System and were selected into Form 4 probably would like to continue into higher education. It will not be surprising to find that the one practical subject taken may be considered as "irrelevant" by the students who are preparing for the Certificate of Education Examination in Form 5, in which most of the subjects taken are academic⁽⁵⁾ and relatively 'specialised', as different from those taken in the junior forms.

The White Paper gives no mention of the implementation of cultural subjects which are so lacking in the secondary schools in general. It is strange to see that the broadening of the curriculum is merely confined to the introduction of practical subjects. In reply to the strong pleas of the unofficials in the Legislative Council for more emphasis on the cultural subjects in schools, the Director of Education pointed to the fact that cultural subjects have already "burgeoned over the last fifteen years" and this "has occurred mainly through our extra-curricular programmes". He reckoned that a little more compulsion will be beneficial but "we must not overdo it"⁽⁶⁾. However, we should bear in mind that the effort in

5, Form 5 students in grammar schools usually take 8 or 9 subjects in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination, all of which, except music are academic subjects. If the practical subject is not made compulsory in the examination, it is unlikely that it will have a significant effect on the senior secondary curriculum.

6. Speech by Mr. Kenneth Topley in Legislative Council on 2.8.1978.

promoting extra-curricular activities is found only in many of those subsidised schools. The private schools are relatively lacking in interest because of the inadequacy of facilities and manpower.

The government's claim of improving the quality of secondary education simply by the introduction of practical and technical subjects without due regard to cultural subjects and the improvement of standards in the private schools can hardly be established. Thus, we may say that the secondary school curriculum has certainly been changed but is still very limited in scope indeed.

At present (1980) the Education Department is inviting opinions from the public~~h~~ and making consultations with relevant educational institutions on the Report on Form Six Education. The need of broadening the range of subjects offered on sixth form courses has been felt since the publication of the informal report "Sixth Form Education in Hong Kong" in January, 1977. The Report stresses that the sixth form courses should not only prepare students for university entrance examinations but should meet the requirements of industry, commerce and the professional bodies for which a university degree is not necessary. The fact that only about 15% of the matriculation students can be admitted into the two universities necessitates a change in the sixth form courses so that those who do not eventually go to the universities can still benefit from the sixth form education. If the sixth form education pattern did change in due course, the strong inclination of Hong Kong students to study for the sake of examination might be rectified to a certain extent.

The aim of the Report is to see that Form 6 courses should "first and foremost be geared to meet the needs of the pupils at their stage of development and should not be unduly influenced by the requirements of tertiary institutions"⁽⁷⁾. The Report suggests a wider, more liberal range of subjects. To ensure a broader curriculum, the course should consist of a combination of major and subsidiary subjects, with the time given to the subsidiary subject half of that given to the major subject. Instead of taking "use of English" in the matriculation examination the students are required to take "use of Chinese" as well, together with their combination of major and subsidiary subjects. Another new subject being

7. The recommendations of the Report are summarised in "Need to Broaden Range of Subjects in Form 6 Stressed", Daily Information Bulletin, 28.1.1977, pp.1-3.

introduced is "General Studies" which can be studied in either Chinese or English. Contrary to the current practice, in which students take either arts or science subjects, it is proposed that the combination of subjects should include one arts and one science subject.

The adoption of a radical range in sixth form education will have very significant implications. Firstly, the two years of sixth form education will have a value of its own, no longer be dictated by the requirement of tertiary education, though it would still maintain its standards which are acceptable to the universities. Secondly, a common two-year course for all form 6 students will lead to one matriculation examination instead of two as at present⁽⁸⁾. Thirdly, the introduction of subsidiary subjects and 'Use of Chinese' helps to broaden the scope of knowledge of the students, especially helping to promote the learning of Chinese. Lastly, the change in the present form of sixth form education will undoubtedly put pressure on the Chinese University of Hong Kong to change its four-year course in line with the three-year course of the Hong Kong University. Recognising the tradition and unique contributions of the Chinese University, it is hard to imagine how much sacrifice this change will involve. As many people have pointed out, the pressure to reduce the course into three years comes from the government who wants to reduce the tremendous cost on higher education, for it costs a lot less to subsidise more students in the second year of Form 6 than to subsidise students for an extra year of university education. There is always no easy solution as priorities and costs are in conflict, especially in the very controversial field of education. The development of Sixth Form curriculum has just started to take place, its fruition can only be seen in the middle or even late eighties.

It is still early for us to say whether these changes in the secondary school curriculum are going in the right direction or not. Further research is needed in this area and public opinions have to be collated in the coming years to see if the new curriculum has in fact brought benefit to the Hong Kong students as well as to the community in general.

8. Students completing the first year of Form 6 can sit for the Chinese University Matriculation Examination whereas students completing two years will sit for the Hong Kong University Matriculation Examination. This results in many students trying to enter the university by sitting for both examinations.

VI Debates on Educational Provisions

A. Aims and Objectives of Hong Kong Education

Looking back over the last twenty years of development in Hong Kong education, both primary and secondary in particular, we can see that the system has grown tremendously in size and structure. The population of primary students has grown from 427,691 in 1960 to 555,545 in 1979; whereas that of the secondary students has grown from 88,495 to 480,213 during the same period⁽¹⁾. Besides such remarkable quantitative improvement, there has been substantial re-organisation and changes notably in the seventies. Departing from the Chinese tradition of scholarly learning as well as grammar school tradition in the fifties and sixties, Hong Kong education began to introduce free and compulsory primary education for all in 1971 and subsequently nine years of universal general education. New systems of selection and allocation replaced the old, competitive public examinations. The curriculum underwent further development which included a change in emphasis on practical subjects. All these important changes took place within the seventies and will continue into the eighties. The educational changes currently taking place have been so fast that neither facilities in schools nor curriculum development seem to be able to keep in pace. Needless to say this will create many problems which in turn lead to debates on the kind of education we are having.

The government is criticised on its short-sighted view in laying down government policy on education in the 1950's and 1960's which leads to the haphazard solutions to educational problems in the 1970's⁽²⁾. These haphazard solutions refer to the abolition of the S.S.E.E. before an adequate machinery can be used to replace it, and the sudden introduction of free and compulsory junior secondary education before there are sufficient places to cater for all of the pupils. Other examples can be found in the introduction of practical and technical subjects which require the necessary facilities which are desperately lacking in many of the secondary schools, and also the expansion of school places without the accompanying

1. Sources are from figures found in Hong Kong Report 1961 and Hong Kong 1980.

2. As criticised by Fr. Joseph Cana reported in "Is Education policy adequate?", Campus, 10.12.1979, p.1.

plans for adequate expansion in the training of teachers. It is justified to say that the government has engaged itself in changing the education structures without prior proper planning.

The failure in proper planning is not unrelated to the government's lack of definite aim in and philosophy of education. If there were one, it could only be found between the lines in the documents and papers concerned with educational policies. In the Report on Education in Hong Kong⁽³⁾ published in 1935, it was noted that:

"In Hong Kong the Director normally comes to his task knowing nothing about schools ... He does not know whether the aims of his schools are the right aims, if indeed it ever occurs to him to ask what their aims are. His purely administrative work is considerable, and it naturally takes him a little time to master the mere routine of his job".

Burney's observation that the head of the Department is an official who knows nothing about education clearly shows the problem involved in planning a relevant and good education policy for the Hong Kong people. This problem still exists today but fortunately consultations have often been made before any major policy is put into operation.

What should be the aim of education in Hong Kong? Without an understanding of the aim of education as conceived by the government, it is difficult for us to see how and why Hong Kong education has been developing as it is. The Hong Kong Annual Report, 1949 states the following on education:

"It has been necessary to take measures to prevent interference with the education system of the Colony in order to ensure that education remains what it should be, namely, training in good citizenship, rather than indoctrination with one particular set of ideas".

The "training of good citizenship" is thought to be still the main goal of education today⁽⁴⁾ as evident in the 1978 Precious Blood Golden Jubilee Secondary School incident in which the school was closed by the Director of Education when the teachers and students organised demonstrations and 'sit-ins' to protest against alleged 'reprisals' against certain teachers

3. E. Burney, M.C., 'Report on Education in Hong Kong', London: Crown Agents for the Colonies, 1935, p.17.

4. Garmen Chan, "After 30 years of playing the numbers game, education must now concentrate on quality", Hong Kong Standard, 1979.

and students who had earlier reported the school's mishandling of finances to the authorities. It is questionable whether the training of good citizenship is what today's education aims for. If good citizenship means pleasing the authorities or government, then conformity with the system will be taken as virtuous. These subservient attitudes, supported by the traditional Chinese obedience to authorities, will stand in the way of making social progress. As Bill Lowe rightly suggests, it is not a "good citizen" but a good individual "who does not allow what is socially expected of him to override his own sense of justice" that is applauded by society⁽⁵⁾. We need the kind of education which can produce individuals who can think, exert his potentials and be able to question the authorities for the good of his community. Social progress can only come about by the effort of such good individuals but not "good citizens" who only know to conform. It is leadership we want.

Educational policies in the sixties continued the elitist tradition which was marked by the introduction of very competitive examinations like the S.S.E.E., Certificate of Education for the secondary school leavers and the two university matriculation examinations. Education for examination was widely accepted since it was the "one-path" education to higher education as well as high paid jobs. The aim of education was equated to the passing of examinations. There was no diversified curricula for pupils of various abilities⁽⁶⁾.

The 1974 White Paper has only one line to say on the sort of education we need in Hong Kong: "This programme should go far to provide for the children of Hong Kong the standards of education which they need if they are to be properly equipped to fend for themselves and serve their fellows in the competitive world of the next decade" (1.9). There is no clarification as to what children really need "to fend for themselves" and how they can "serve their fellows in the competitive world". All we can postulate is from the provision of the nine-year compulsory education which contains new curricula on practical and technical subjects. The inadequate provision of places in the senior secondary forms for Form 3 leavers lead many

5. Bill Lowe, "Education: What are we trying to achieve?", Hong Kong Standard 21.11.1978, p.9.

6. Elizabeth Rowe, Failure in School: Aspects of the Problem in Hong Kong, Hong Kong Council for Educational Research, No.3, 1966, p.21.

people to think that the nine-year general education is actually a preparation for cheap labour for the industrial sector which is always in great demand of a well-trained labour force. This allegation is not without ground if we consider the selective nature of the Junior Secondary School Certificate of Education Examination proposed in the White Paper but, fortunately, abandoned in face of acute opposition. The churning out of 15-year-olds for the needs of an economic society is regarded by some people as perfectly valid for it actualises the contribution of educational sector for the economic growth of society. The more the children are educated beyond Form 3 the less likely they would take up jobs in the industrial sector. This is very true in the case of Hong Kong where the earning power of the workers is very much below that of a secondary school graduate.

As the insufficiency of senior secondary school places is regretted by some people, largely parents, teachers and educators, as a great harm to the education of young people, it is thought otherwise by the industrialists and planners of educational policy. It is thought that "too large a provision of senior secondary places will seriously disrupt the manpower supply to industry at the craft and operative levels"⁽⁷⁾. This represents the view that provisions in our education system is geared to manpower needs which arise out of social and economic conditions of the society in the future (or present). Out of the consideration of manpower needs is the question: "What kind of training should the education in Hong Kong provide for our future manpower?". To this the 1974 and 1978 White Papers clearly provide the answer of introducing more technical education, for industries and trade are Hong Kong's only means of survival.

If we follow the argument of the importance of producing manpower suitable for the economic needs of Hong Kong, it then comes to the harsh reality of selecting pupils for higher education, which accounts for only a minority, and those for industrial training. However, it is not easy to predict the right proportion of pupils in different streams of training. It is rightly admitted by one of the planners of the Green Paper that it is difficult to forecast our manpower needs "with such accuracy that we can say that we need so many people to be educated in such a way and to such a level in ten years' time"⁽⁸⁾. Thus, there is an inherent danger

7. Views expressed by Mr. Francis Tien and Mr. S.L. Chen in the Legislative Council, July, 1978.

8. Speech by Hon. Q.W. Lee in Legislative Council, 5.7.1978.

in educating young people solely on the basis of economic demands of society. There is also the assumption that what pupils learn in school be it academic or practical subjects, will be relevant and appropriate to the jobs they eventually take up after they have left school. But in reality this is not usually the case. In an ever-changing technological world, the skills learnt in school are always incompatible to what is required in the job situation. This is conceivable if we compare the kinds of facilities offered for training in schools and those actually in operation in industries.

Moreover, manpower training often neglects the aspirations of individual students. Those who are not selected for subsidised places in senior secondary forms may be forced to take up jobs in industries which they do not want. This will lead to frustrations and more social problems. The adoption of a selection and allocation system to separate pupils into the 'academic' and the 'vocational' streams without giving them free choice is grossly undemocratic in the present world. Furthermore, we cannot confidently say that the decision made by the selection scheme (mainly computer operated) is more appropriate than the decision made by the teachers, parents or students themselves in choosing the course of education for students. In the foreseeable future, at least up to the mid-eighties, education for manpower will continue to prevail in Hong Kong.

The present development has definitely slanted towards educating young people to serve the economic needs of the society. What about the government's responsibility to improve education in terms of serving children's own needs? This question has become more pressing since the publication of the 1978 White Paper which mentions some aspects of improving the quality of education (Chapter 5).

As discussed before in the previous section on the two White Papers, the government's effort in improving the quality of education mainly concentrates on the provision of facilities and giving 'encouragement' to schools or 'inducement' to teachers. Any mention of educational aims tends to be vague. There is also no policy on the enforcement of educational aims, if there are specific ones, in the schools under the supervision of the Education Department. It seems that individual schools should take up their own responsibilities when the 'quality of education' is concerned⁽⁹⁾.

9. See 1978 White Paper, sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.8 and also 5.23 which is on the choice of language as medium of instruction by schools themselves.

The mere provisions of facilities, even though they are adequate and relevant to demands, cannot represent an improvement of the quality of education. The quality of education can be improved in many other ways such as the attainment of educational goals related to the nurturing of individual students.

One of these goals is to help young people to realise their full potentials, enable them to explore, criticise, create and be interested in social and community affairs. That means to say, besides learning the skills for survival in the competitive world, we have to educate, not train, young people to be able to think for themselves and to cope with challenges presented in society. This can only come about by means of an all-round, quality education. Any form of selective, competitive examination will distort the curriculum and tailor it to suit the requirements of the examination. This imbalanced curriculum in the past produced students with inadequate powers of thinking and unsuitable for the demands of society in general.

An education which provides opportunity for the development of individuals is urgently needed by Hong Kong students who have long been deprived of an adequate education in moral, physical, social and aesthetic fields. It is important that schools should "provide experiences which will enable students to grow as individuals, spiritually, physically, intellectually and to become informed, sensitive, responsible members of society"⁽¹⁰⁾. To achieve these objectives, Hong Kong students have to be free from the tyranny of examinations, be given a broader curriculum which includes not only practical subjects but cultural subjects with due emphasis, and also to engage in a wide range of extra-curricular activities through which they can participate and serve in the community.

The education for the development of individuals requires far more sources than the provision of sufficient secondary places or manpower for industries. It demands an environment which is conducive to learning; that means adequate space for various activities, good teacher-pupil ratio, a healthy school environment and a well-balanced curriculum taught by well-qualified staff. Hong Kong secondary schools can barely meet all these

10. The philosophy of education of the Maryknoll Convent School.

requirements. In many schools, even the basic facilities are inadequate and teacher qualifications are low⁽¹¹⁾. Perhaps in the few years to come, the Education Department should concentrate their work on inspecting schools, giving necessary help to improve standards. It is reasonable that we should demand a better quality in education once the basic provisions of educational facilities have been met. And, with all the surpluses in the government, improving quantity as well as quality in education, which determines the quality of our future society, is not at all impossible. The last two decades signify an improvement in education on quantity, now we are ready to move on to improving the quality, if only the government could be made to realise the importance of building a stable, educated society, economically as well as socially.

11. "Inadequate Standard of new secondary schools", Daily Information Bulletin, 30.3.1978, pp.5-6. Standards are low especially in the new urban areas and the New Territories.

B. Strain of the Two-Language System

Introduction

It has been said that Hong Kong's education has only got quantity but no quality; it has economic value but no educational value. But society at large, parents, teachers, students, all seem to be quite satisfied with this unhealthy emphasis on the economic value of education in Hong Kong. As a result, competition is accepted and also encouraged. Competence in English means more money and so a demand for English becomes the basic requirement for many jobs and further education.

Many people seem to think that since Hong Kong is a colony and therefore this is what we get. We tend to accept everything too readily and seldom pause and think, least to change.

Not until the early seventies did some teachers and educators begin to probe into the problem of the education in Hong Kong.

In 1973 four young teachers made a report¹ on the problems of using English as a language medium in teaching and learning, which was thought to be a key factor in jeopardizing pupils of the chance of a good education in Hong Kong. This report echoed the current thinking and discussion on making Chinese as the official language in Hong Kong. From then on, great concern has been expressed about the effect of using English as the medium of instruction in secondary education.

The harmful effects of using English as an instructional medium in Hong Kong

In the report 'At What Cost' the authors point out that Hong Kong students have been subject to many accusations regarding their studies: they are memorising machines; they rarely have any questions to ask about their lessons; they are reluctant to read outside the prescribed syllabuses, they write English in Chinese grammar and Chinese in English grammar; they cannot express themselves adequately in either English or Chinese; they speak Chinglish; they are never able to produce original answers in their work or in examinations; they know very little about the society about them and are not interested in finding out about it.

Many teachers and educators believe that using a foreign language, namely English, as the medium of instruction in schools is largely responsible

1. Cheng et al, At What Cost, Hong Kong, 1973

for this state of affairs.

Before the seventies, there had been neither studies nor discussions, nor any questioning of whether using English as the medium in schools is in fact the best way of achieving the necessary standard. Nor has there been any critical examination of the students' language abilities to find out how adequate these are as tools for learning. More important still, there has not been any effective evaluation of what sort of education our students are getting under the present education system and provisions.

Language in relation to learning

In Hong Kong most students are taught through the medium of English in schools, outside school they use Chinese to communicate at home and at work. There is very little relation between the language that is taught and what can be communicated in the mind of the students. English, the language through which knowledge is acquired, is used in school all the time but is not related to students' life experiences; whereas Chinese is not given the opportunity for its expression and refinement but is just taught as one of the school subjects, sometimes even optionally.

Since the use of English outside school is limited, the standard of English is not good enough to enable students to express their ideas and feelings freely. On the other hand, students cannot express themselves adequately in Chinese either because of the poverty in vocabulary and special terms or their expressions are not up to standard. Hence we can see that there will be great emotional and attitudinal damage to students right from the start of secondary education, not to mention the harmful effect on the students' search for national and cultural identity when a foreign language is occupying a much greater position than their mother tongue. Furthermore, we may also predict that when no language ability is adequately developed, be it second language or mother tongue, the intellectual and mental development of the child will be seriously affected.

The switch of language medium at the age of 12

In Hong Kong over 90% of the primary school pupils are in Chinese Primary schools but nearly 80% of secondary school pupils are in Anglo-Chinese secondary schools which employ English as the medium of instruction. That means at the age of 11 or 12 most pupils have to switch from learning through a Chinese medium to an English medium of instruction.

Such a switch takes place at the time when the children's language ability in the mother tongue begins to develop, thinking faculties and curiosity begin to take shape and when language is beginning to relate closely the reality around them. Thus, such a switch will mean the stronger language, mother tongue, is being slackened in development and the children have to concentrate much of their effort in tackling the foreign language. Since English is used in teaching other new subjects like Geography, History, Maths and Science, that means the children are learning new information and concepts through a foreign language at the time when their skills in that language have not been developed adequately. As a result, for those hard-working ones, much of the time is spent on looking up the meanings of words in dictionaries. To understand a lesson will mean an attempt to translate the English sentences or words into Chinese first before the students are able to make sense out of the lesson. It is not uncommon to find students memorising pages of notes in order to reproduce them when answering questions in class as well as in examinations. Thus, studying becomes a memory exercise.

It is evident that in using English as the medium the learning load of students is increased. No wonder any curiosity or love of learning will be destroyed in the course of secondary or even primary education. Very often good reading habits are not promoted or developed at all, not to mention reading for pleasure. It is the heavy reliance on rote learning that many children can remember and recite things that they can barely reproduce in examinations. So it is hardly surprising to find their work "unoriginal" and "unimaginative".

According to John Macnamara, monolinguals and bilinguals are equally good at numerical arithmetical problems but bilinguals are weaker in solving arithmetic problems which involve language. The difficulty of bilinguals in solving written problems presented in the weaker language is associated with the semantic decoding of words. They will also have difficulty in recalling and picking out relevant messages in the process of decoding. This helps to explain why students very often cannot explain abstract ideas in their own words (English) and they have to fall back on rote learning to aid their expression.

The present system of instruction also has an adverse effect on preparing students for higher education. Rev. E. Kvan, in a reading test administered to first year students of Hong Kong University found that

2. Described in E. Kvan, "Problems of Bilingual Milieu in Hong Kong: Strain of the two-language system", Jarvie, I.C. (ed.), Hong Kong: A Society in Transition, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969, pp. 328-9.

50% of the students read at a speed of less than 150 words per minute and 75% under 175, and rates of 80 - 100 words per minute are not uncommon. Such speeds are quoted for children of 12-13 years of age in the U.S.A. and they correspond exactly with those of British students reading French, their second language. But in a similar test designed for the Chinese language, the average speed obtained for first year students in the University was 300 characters per minute, which is much higher than that obtained by using English material. The report thus concluded that this rate of reading reveals quite a different kind of competence in reading.

In another experiment of assessing maturity in essays, 2 sets of essays on the same subjects but written in two languages were obtained. Students from Chinese Middle Schools showed more originality of thought and greater maturity in general than those who use English as a medium and studied Chinese as a subject only. The results correspond closely with the impressions of experienced educators that the pupils in the Chinese medium classes are more responsive, more interested in their surroundings both in and outside the school³.

Another important problem in using English as the teaching medium is that the language the teachers use to teach is also their weaker language. So students not only learn badly; they are also taught wrongly. We can imagine how numerous students and teachers struggle hard to learn and teach through a foreign medium and the domination of a foreign language in the curriculum results in an enormous amount of time being wasted and taken from worthier subjects.

Learning a foreign or second language is not wrong but we have to ask the following questions:

- a) How many people have to know this language in society?
- b) How much should the language be taught?
- c) For what purpose are they learning it - for study, for work?

It seems to be fairly correct to press for a high standard of English which is required of those who wish to enter university but grossly unfair for those, the majority of the secondary school leavers, who do not have the chance of entering university. So is it not better for these people

3. Timothy Light, "The Crucial Factor in Making Chinese an Official Language: The Role of English in the Schools", New Asia Life, 13, 10, 16th Nov., 1970, p.2.

to spend more time in acquiring a sounder, all-round, general secondary Chinese education instead of spending all their effort in learning the second language?

Research findings on the language problem

A number of researches on the language abilities and attitudes and the effects of using different languages of instruction in Hong Kong have been carried out in the last decade. Their findings throw light on the difficulties and strain experienced by the students as a result of the two-language conflict.

A. Questionnaire findings of some university students' language abilities and attitudes toward the Chinese and English languages⁴

A sample of 170 first year students of the Chinese University of Hong Kong is used, among them 78 came from Anglo-Chinese schools.

The most commonly used language is Cantonese (99.38%) which is also the language of their family (91.41%). 95% of the students have their primary education in Chinese and 52.2% have their secondary education in English.

The questionnaire contains questions directed towards three main areas:

- a) Students' self-rating of their language abilities, both in Chinese and English.
- b) Their attitudes toward the two languages.
- c) Their opinions on the use of English as a medium of instruction in Hong Kong.

Findings

1. The self-ratings of language abilities can be summarised in the following table:

	<u>Competence* in Chinese</u>	<u>Competence* in English</u>
<u>Language abilities</u>		
Speaking	56%	4%
Writing	52%	6%
Listening	88%	10%
Reading	64%	13%

(*Competence = very good, good)

4. Cheng et al, op.cit., pp.4ff.

2. As to their attitudes towards Chinese and English as languages, there is unanimous agreement that there should be a common and unified language for all the Chinese people, namely, Mandarin (which is the language used in China).

There is also consensus on the reason why they have to learn English:

- a) English is an international language
- b) English is used to meet the needs of modern technology.
- c) Self-advancement.

From the questionnaire it shows that the students are of the opinion that English is not inherently better than other languages. 98.7% of the respondent students will still learn the language even if Hong Kong is not a colony. The reasons given are:

- 1) The language can help them to understand the world.
- 2) They can communicate with other people in foreign countries.
- 3) Everyone should know at least one foreign language.
- 4) Better career prospects.

Strangely enough, the last reason has got very low ranking but in reality this seems to be the most common and true reason for most people in Hong Kong to learn English.

But when a hypothetical case was put forward: "if Hong Kong were not a colony - ", the significance of a knowledge of English for career prospects and self advancement is drastically diminished in the answers. This can show the fact that the necessity to learn English is very much caused by the present political and economic situation of Hong Kong.

3. Opinions of using English as the medium of instruction.

Students agree widely that the heavy emphasis on English in the education system has put strain on them.

76% of students agreed that it is against basic educational principles to use a foreign language as the medium of instruction. 88% thought that the medium of instruction will directly affect educational achievements. 65% thought Chinese should be used as the major medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools. 64% rejected the idea that English is still a suitable medium no matter whether Chinese is accorded official language status or not.

It is remarkable to note that while being asked about their own personal preference for Chinese or English as the medium of instruction if given a

free choice, the majority, 95.7%, choose Chinese for primary education but only 46.1% for secondary education. The slight majority opting for English as the medium of instruction in the secondary schools reveals a contradiction in the students' attitude and their personal preference.

This finding is interestingly comparable to another survey which sought to find out the extent of English used in teaching junior forms of Anglo-Chinese schools in Hong Kong⁵. All of the 2,471 Form One students from 53 public and private schools would like their teaching supplemented by the use of Chinese to help them make up whatever they could not understand in English. However, the use of all Chinese in teaching in the textbooks and in classroom interaction was not favoured by the students. None of them wants the medium of instruction to be either completely English or Chinese. The report concludes that it seems no single language mode for instruction would satisfy the needs of all students and changes in policy should continue to allow some degree of flexibility to cater for group differences.

Such ambivalent attitudes of the majority of students towards the use of English as the teaching medium reflects their practical and pragmatic considerations regarding the emphasis of the importance of English in society at large. English has become the necessary requirement for getting a job in the Civil Service and in most of the commercial and industrial sectors. From the results of the questionnaires and survey we can see that the commercial value of English has been implicitly acknowledged by the majority of university students as well as the junior secondary students. Perhaps this is the most important hindrance to the promotion of Chinese in the schools and society.

B. Will the use of Chinese as the medium of instruction yield better results in the Certificate of Education Examinations?

In 1977, of all students attending secondary schools, excepting those in matriculation classes and those in evening schools, approximately 93.8% were in grammar schools. If we omit from the total number of secondary students those who study in English speaking schools which cater mainly

5. The survey was conducted by Dr. Peter Tam, lecturer of the School of Education at the University of Hong Kong. The results were reported in "School children spell it out: Teach us in English", South China Morning Post, 30th April, 1979.

for non-Chinese students, there were 375,189 students studying in day secondary schools; among these, 306,934 were in Anglo-Chinese schools, i.e. 81.8% of these students were studying in the medium of English. The rest were studying in the Chinese Middle Schools. Moreover, the majority of the teachers were Chinese and were teaching in a foreign language, English.

Many teachers in Anglo-Chinese schools are acutely aware of the learning difficulties which the students experience as a result of being taught in the medium of English. These difficulties are particularly great in the first year. For some students, being taught in the medium of English constitutes a great learning obstacle, even up to the final year of their study.

That the education system is examination-oriented constitutes further difficulties. It is not unusual to find that many students try to learn the stuff by heart at the expense of real understanding. Consequently, many teachers feel that it would be preferable to use Chinese as the medium instead, though it is recognised that a knowledge of English is an advantage in Hong Kong and is essential for most of the better paid jobs. There is a strong feeling that in using English as the teaching medium, education as a whole is often sacrificed. It would be better for secondary education to be conducted in the medium of Chinese with English well taught as a second language.

A research was conducted in 1977 to find out whether students who completed the five year course in Chinese achieved better results in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination than those who completed the same course in English⁶.

The researchers' hypothesis is that if students of comparable academic ability went to Anglo-Chinese and Chinese Middle Schools of comparable standard, the students attending the Middle Schools should achieve better results in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination than those attending the Anglo-Chinese schools. The basic assumption is that students of the Middle Chinese Schools will learn through the medium of their mother tongue which facilitates better understanding and performance of general subjects in the secondary school.

6. B.Y. Chan, A. Hinton & Betty Yau, "A Comparison of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination Results of Students from Two Different Language Streams", Education Journal, 7, The School of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, March, 1979.

Of course there are many other factors involved in addition to the language of instruction; for example, family background, motivation, public approbation, but it was considered worthwhile to compare students from these two types of schools who had been put in the same blocks on the basis of their performance in the S.S.E.E. which is the Secondary Schools Entrance Examination five years earlier.

Since schools vary greatly in standard, the chosen Anglo-Chinese and Chinese Middle Schools were matched so that they were similar in facilities and in the extent to which their teachers were trained. An attempt was also made to find out the children's background, socio-economic level of families and the extent to which their parents and siblings had been educated. The sample of students was chosen with particular regard to their distinct medium of instruction, their S.S.E.E. results of 1972 and also their learning environment.

Ten pairs of schools with similar allocation patterns were selected, each pair consisting of one Anglo-Chinese and one Chinese Middle School. All of them being government or aided secondary schools.

Findings

a. Language of instruction and text books

All except one of the Chinese Middle Schools use Chinese almost exclusively as the medium of instruction though some of them use English in teaching Social Studies (It is because the Education Television Programmes of Social Studies are produced in English).

In Anglo-Chinese schools, the social subjects are predominantly taught in English, supplemented by the use of Chinese; whereas Biology and Maths are taught in a mixture of the two languages.

In some Chinese Middle Schools text books written in English are also used especially in Geography and Maths. The text books used in Anglo-Chinese schools are all in English except Chinese subjects.

Comparison of Students' background (see Table 1)

The student from a Chinese Middle School is likely to be older and enter more subjects in the C.E.E. than the student from an Anglo-Chinese school. The home of the Chinese Middle School student tends to be poorer, the father's occupation carries less prestige and the siblings have had less

TABLE 1.Comparison of Students' Background(Table 1. Comparison Between Student Background)Significant X^2 's (indicated by x)

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Block5</u>	<u>Block6</u>	<u>Block7</u>	<u>Block8</u>	<u>Direction</u>
1. Sex	x	x	x		More G. in CMS
2. Age			x		S. in CMS older
3. Type of Housing		x	x	x	S. in ACS older
4. Occupation: Father	x		x		Lower in CMS
5. Occupation: Mother					
6. Education: Father					
7. Education: Mother					
8. Education: Sibling		x	x		Lower in CMS
9. Self Expectation		x	x		ambivalent
10. Family Expectation			x		Lower in CMS
11. Family Encouragement					
12. Family Assistance					
13. Time Spent in Study					
14. No. of Subjects Entered	x	x	x	x	S. in CMS more
15. E.P.A.					

G = girls S = student

TABLE 2Comparison of Certificate of Education Results(Table 2. Comparison between CEE results of Chinese Middle School and Anglo-Chinese School Students)

<u>SSEE Block, 1972</u>	5	<u>T values</u> 6	7	8
<u>CEE Results, 1977</u>				
Geography	-1.90	-0.35	-4.94**	-0.42
History	-1.65	-1.49	0.55	0.88
E.P.A.	0.63	0.66	-1.34	-0.62
Biology	-2.13*	-2.20*	3.19*	-2.28*
Mathematics	0.15	-1.87	-3.42**	0.16

Note: 1. Level of significance ** = 0.01, * = 0.05

2. Blocks 1-4 and 9 are omitted owing to the few students in the selected schools in these blocks.

Source: B. Chan et al, 'A Comparison of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination Results of Students from Two Different Language Streams', in Education Journal, No. 7, 1979, Hong Kong.

schooling. Though some Chinese Middle School students have higher self-expectations as regards further study, the family expectations tend to be lower. It appears in general that the students of Chinese Middle Schools are less privileged culturally and socially than their counterparts in Anglo-Chinese schools.

Comparison of Certificate of Education Results (Table 2)

The results indicate that students from the Anglo-Chinese schools, especially those from blocks 5 and 6 of the S.S.E.E., generally obtained better results in the C.E.E. in the subjects Geography, History, E.P.A., Biology and Maths. They are especially superior in Geography and Maths. It was noted that students from the Chinese Middle Schools took more subjects in the C.E.E. on average than those from Anglo-Chinese schools, but among those taking equal numbers of subjects the pattern showed no significant change.

Discussion

The fact that the H.K.C.E.E. results of students from Anglo-Chinese schools were better than those of their counterparts in the Chinese Middle Schools ran contrary to the original expectations.

If we take into account the differences in the socio-economic backgrounds of the two groups as indicated by the X^2 analysis, the expectations will be very different. It may be correct to say that students from Anglo-Chinese schools enjoy a higher level of cultural and social enrichment than their counterparts.

Motivational factor plays a very important part in the study. It has been popular belief that education in an Anglo-Chinese school leads to greater success in society. Thus, for many of these students who have not been assigned to an Anglo-Chinese school by the S.S.E.E. allocation scheme will tend to be disappointed. They may regard their entry into a Chinese Middle School as an indication of their academic inadequacy. Since the Hong Kong society considers education in a Chinese Middle School as less advantageous in the job market, students from these schools will undoubtedly lack the motivation to work hard for they cannot see any better prospect after graduation. This had been confirmed by the interviews during which these students expressed anxiety over employment prospects.

Though this study seems to be unable to substantiate the claim that using Chinese as the medium of instruction will enable the students to perform better in the examinations, it does bring to light very important factors and problems confronting the secondary education in Hong Kong. That is, the socio-economic factor and the self-image of the Chinese Middle School students.

We may also argue that it is exactly the over-emphasis of education in English that has led to the parents' preference of sending their children to English medium schools, hoping that by doing so, their children will have a better prospect in higher education and eventually getting a well-paid job. This can be reflected in the declining number of Chinese Middle Schools in Hong Kong:

Anglo-Chinese schools : 303 (1978) 333 (1979)

Chinese Middle Schools : 106 (1978) 97 (1979)

The growth and continual popularity of Anglo-Chinese schools would undoubtedly account for the fact that bright students are being creamed off when they are entering secondary schools.

In view of the deep-rooted bias towards the encouragement of education in English, and the harmful effects it brings to education in general, an overall evaluation and change in policy in secondary education is urgently required.

Another study on the comparison of the patterns of differential attitudes between Anglo-Chinese school students and the Chinese Middle School students reveals three important factors which affect differential aptitudes: intelligence, environment and language⁷. It was found that though taught in the medium of Chinese, the performance of the Chinese Middle School students in Chinese language and Chinese comprehension was still lower than that of the Anglo-Chinese students. In general, the performance of Chinese Middle School students was lower than their counter-
(See Diagram 1)
parts_A. However, they did better in Chinese logical thinking, Maths, spatial thinking and symbols but it is not sure whether this is due to the use of Chinese as the medium of instruction or due to students' intelligence and motivation or other factors. (See 1) The implications of this study are that

7. P.K. Siu, "香港中學生的能向模式",^{*} Education Journal, 7, March, 1979, pp.1-24. Results summarised in Table 3 and diagram 1.

(* The article was written in Chinese. Its title may be translated as:
"Pattern Analysis of Differential Aptitudes of Hong Kong Secondary Students")

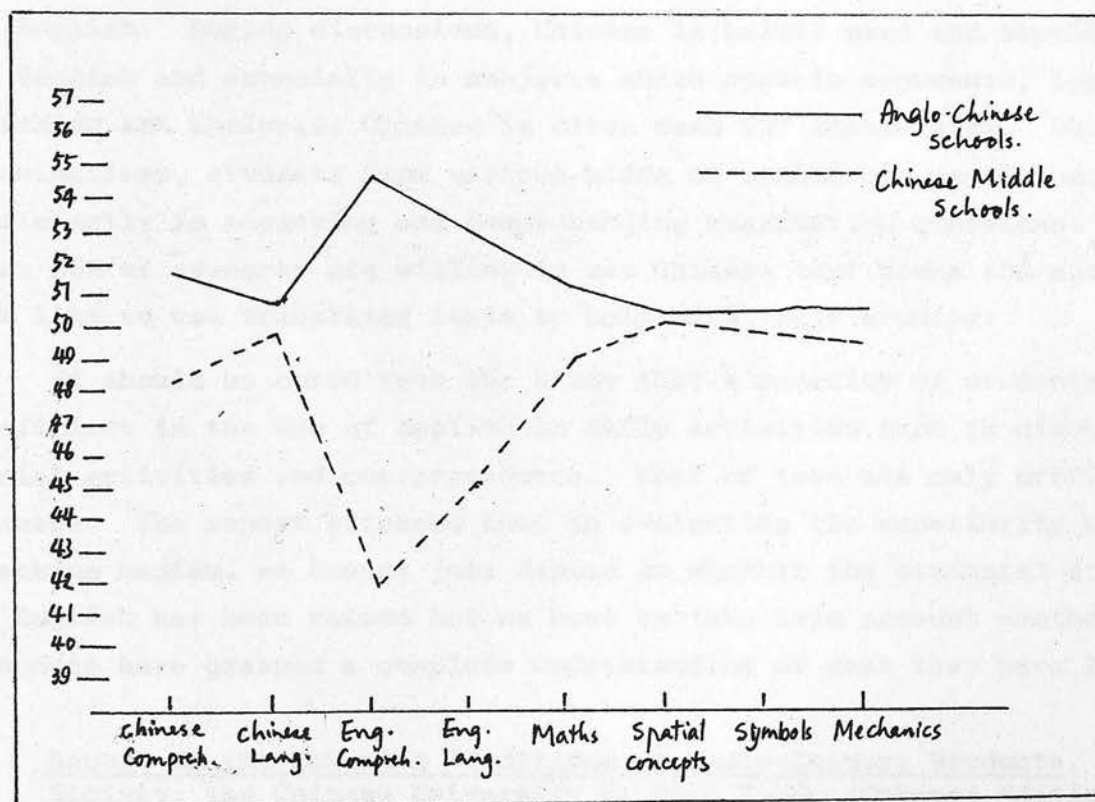
TABLE 3

(Table 3: Comparison of the mean & standard deviation between students in the Anglo-Chinese Schools & Chinese Middle Schools)

Group		Chinese Compreh.	Chinese Language	English Compreh.	English Language	Maths	Spatial concepts	Symbols	Mechanics
Anglo-Chinese Schools (N ₁)	mean	35.07	34.88	32.58	33.54	25.03	25.80	26.62	28.95
	standard deviation	6.12	5.62	7.95	6.84	6.40	7.16	8.05	5.27
Chinese Middle Schools (N ₂)	mean	32.71	34.50	20.56	27.50	23.42	25.31	25.28	27.98
	standard deviation	7.36	5.02	6.10	6.30	5.78	7.12	8.95	5.12

$$N_1 = 489$$

$$N_2 = 254$$

DIAGRAM 1

(Diagram 2: Comparison of patterns of differential aptitudes of students in Anglo-Chinese schools & Chinese Middle schools)

Source: Ping-kee Siu, 'Patterns Analysis of Differential Aptitudes of Hong Kong Secondary Students', in Education Journal, No. 7, 1979, Hong Kong.

attention should be drawn to environmental and motivational factors as well which affect students' learning and that students from different language streams tend to have different self-concepts which affects their performance in general.

C. Language of instruction and its effects on learning in Anglo-Chinese students.

In 1979 a more comprehensive research on the effects of using English in various learning conditions on Anglo-Chinese students was carried out⁸. It was found that using English as the medium of instruction does affect the learning of many students at varying degrees. It is definite that the use of English creates difficulties for students at different levels.

Students experience difficulties when they have to switch from Chinese to English on entering secondary school. About 50% of Form One students from different schools require half a year to one year to adapt themselves to the change. In using English in their learning process 38.4% of the Form One students find it difficult and 42.8% find it rather difficult. In asking questions, no matter for what kind of students, they tend to use Chinese or ask questions after lesson, trying to avoid expressing themselves in English. During discussions, Chinese is mainly used and supplemented by English and especially in subjects which contain arguments, logical thinking and analysis, Chinese is often used for instruction. During examinations, students from various kinds of school can use Chinese efficiently in answering and comprehending examination questions. More than 50% of students are willing to use Chinese text books and more than 60% like to use translated texts to help with their studies.

It should be noted from the study that a majority of students are not proficient in the use of English in daily activities such as discussions, social activities and correspondence. Most of them are only proficient in Chinese. The report stresses that in evaluating the superiority of any teaching medium, we cannot just depend on whether the students' standard of English has been raised but we have to take into account whether the students have grasped a complete understanding of what they have learnt

8. Report on the Learning Conditions of Anglo-Chinese Students, Education Society, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, (Chinese Edition), Aug., 1979.

through the medium⁹. Furthermore, if we continue to use the standard of English as the only means in evaluating students, those who are weak in language abilities but not otherwise will be left behind in great disadvantage¹⁰. Accordingly, the recommendations of this report are to abolish the compulsory use of English in teaching, to encourage students to use Chinese in their learning, to reduce the work-load of teachers and to set up a committee in the Education Department for the translation of books and text books into Chinese for the use of students¹¹.

Conclusion

From the various researches on the use of English as the medium of instruction in secondary schools in Hong Kong it is clearly seen that students are unnecessarily hampered in their learning process because of the difficulty in comprehending concepts and information in the second language.

The over-emphasis of the importance of English by society has created a steadfast bias against education in Chinese which eventually leads to the loss of prestige and status of the Chinese language as well as the Chinese Middle Schools. Inevitably, the intellectually bright students are creamed off to the Anglo-Chinese schools which are favoured by both the parents and employers or even the students themselves. However, being educated in Anglo-Chinese schools does not necessarily help students to achieve a better understanding of what they are to learn because of the language problem. It is seen as a great waste if students continue to learn in English but are unable to grasp adequately what is provided for them in the medium of English.

In order to remedy the situation, an overall evaluation of the whole education system is necessary. More important is the need to formulate a realistic language policy by the Government for society as a whole. Taking into account of the importance of English in international commerce, on which Hong Kong thrives¹², and its role in helping China to modernisation,

9. Ibid, p.33

10. Ibid, p.34

11. Ibid, p.35

12. The importance of English for Hong Kong was stressed in a speech by Mr. T.L. Tsim, assistant director of Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce trade division, South China Morning Post, 12.10.1979.

we would suggest that:

1. English should be well taught as a subject, especially in communication skills.
2. The use of Chinese should be compulsory as the medium of instruction from primary up to junior secondary.
3. Chinese should be used to supplement English throughout secondary education.
4. The qualities of aided and private secondary schools should be upgraded and maintained to ensure a better environment for all students.
5. The translation of text books and the writing of teaching materials should be taken as priorities in educational planning for the years to come.
6. Teachers should have better opportunities in in-service training on language teaching.

VII Conclusion

From the above studies two main trends of development in Hong Kong secondary education can be identified over the last two decades (1960-1980): one is the continual school expansion programmes aiming at providing sufficient school places, the other is the gradual shift from an elitist, grammar-school tradition to a general, less academic-oriented education.

Changes carried out in education have so far been haphazard. The impetus to change can be seen as generally brought about by the social and economic pressures in Hong Kong at various points of time. The sudden large increases in population in the fifties and early sixties forced the government to expand primary education which was then in excessive demand; whereas little attention was paid to the provision of sufficient secondary school places. Only when universal free primary education had been achieved and economic conditions continued to show marked advancement did the government give priority to the expansion of secondary education. As nine-year free and compulsory education for all was eventually introduced, the school-leaving age was raised to 15.

Economic considerations are found to have played the most important part in the formulation and implementation of educational policies in Hong Kong. The heavy reliance on the private sector for the provision of additional school places is considered as an effective means of providing education at a lesser cost on the part of the government. Moreover, demands from industries and commerce for a well-trained work-force have directly influenced the development of technical education as well as a greater emphasis on the practical and technical subjects in the secondary school curriculum. Understandably, education for the economic needs of the society is currently accepted as one of the main goals of education.

That education has been geared toward the economic needs of Hong Kong is also exemplified by the emphasis on the importance of using and learning English in schools, which has inevitably created learning problems for many secondary students.

The abolition of public examinations and the introduction of a selection and allocation system based on internal assessments mark an important stage in the departure from an elitist educational policy in Hong Kong, which is generally welcomed by the public.

Though the 1978 White Paper spells out the government's intention of improving the quality of education, the actual measures taken fall short of expectations. The inadequacies of government's plans to improve education are largely due to the lack of overall, long-term planning, a clear and definite philosophy of education and also the manpower to carry out the policies.

It is expected that Hong Kong education in general will be further improved, not only in quantity but also in quality, when a review of the overall Hong Kong education system is to be carried out in 1981 as announced by the government.

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